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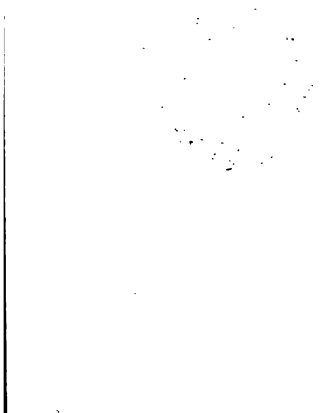
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ADVENTURES OF A PROTESTANT IN SEARCH OF A RELIGION.


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THE ADVENTURES

OF A

PROTESTANT IN SEARCH OF A RELIGION.

By IOTA.

"Silvis, ubi passim
Palantes error certo de tramite pellit,
Ille sinistrorsùm, hic dextrorsùm abit; unus utrique
Error, sed variis illudit partibus."—Hor. Sat. ii. 3.





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1873.

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TO

THE REV. GEORGE AKERS, M.A. (OXON),

THIS LITTLE EFFORT

IN DEFENCE OF OUR HOLY FAITH

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

AS A

Tribute of Gratitude

FOR MANY KINDNESSES, MANY WISE COUNSELS, AND MANY HAPPY HOURS IN HIS SOCIETY,

AND AS A

SLIGHT RECOGNITION

OF HIS

INDEFATIGABLE EFFORTS

IN BEHALF OF RELIGION AND THE MENTAL AND MORAL IMPROVEMENT OF YOUNG MEN.

London, 1873.

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INTRODUCTION.

SINCE the Divine spark, the human intellect, was first transmitted from its heavenly source to burn within the heavy and cumbrous lamp of a mortal body, it has never burned more brightly, or struggled more vigorously to be rid of its encumbrance, than in this nineteenth century. That flickering and often dimly-burning flame from the altar of the Land of Light never strove so much to discover the secrets of its birth, and find its proper home, as it does now; for the human soul is an exile here. "This is not my rest," it declares amidst the din and whirl and battle of thought and mental activity of this nineteenth century. Have you ever listened to the little babbling brook as it rushes on, and tried to make out what it said? "Onward! on to yonder silent river; I cannot stay here, I must onward!" it seems to say; and then the deep and softly-flowing river, too earnest and solemn to babble or tell its aim, except an endeavour be made to arrest, or divert its progress, points still onward, onward to the bosom of old ocean, to lose itself again in the source from whence its every drop

was derived. And this principle of centripetal attraction seems to run through the world of nature. The principle of gravitation draws earthly and gross things downwards, but the heaven-born can only struggle towards its home.

Rivers to the ocean run, nor stay in all their course;
Fire, ascending, seeks the sun; both speed them to their source.
So the soul, derived from God, pants to view His glorious face;
Forward runs to His abode, to rest in His embrace.

Music, Light, and the Soul of Man are heaven-born, and they ever point to their fatherland, as the needle to the pole.

When Pilate asked, What is Truth? he only expressed the demand of his age. The noblest minds of antiquity had been trying to solve the problem and had failed; disappointment, blighted hope and despair of coming to the light were concentrated in that bitter and cynical query, for whose answer he did not care to wait.

And so men have gone on, as St. Paul says, "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." And why the sad complaint? why this bitter cry? "Who will show us any good?" Is there no such thing as Truth? Are we for ever to be as the alchemists, toiling at the crucible and watching with weary eyes and ceaseless vigil for the advent of the Philosopher's stone that shall reward our toil?

Are we ever to be letting down our dredging-line into the deep, and coming no nearer to the truth? ever voyaging and straining our eyes for that continent, that land beyond the sea, that never gladdens our eyes? but age after age to follow the mirage and drink only deeper of the cup of disappointment? These are the thoughts that now in this nineteenth

century are racking many a thinking man's heart. Pilate's question will be repeated and re-echoed by ten thousand times ten thousand weary, thinking, toiling minds this very night, and to-morrow, and still to-morrow, as the day's research has brought them no answer from the dark unknown land beyond.

And yet there is an answer: there is the Truth, there is the guide; all is not so dark, albeit veiled and hidden from our unassisted reason. The Great Father of spirits has not left Himself without a voice or sign, whereby to guide the wandering intellect back to Himself. To the eye of the uninitiated the blaze of heaven's nightly illumination is a confused mass of scattered stars without order or arrangement; but to the sailor they are guides, and out of the apparent disorder he detects the Pole-star by which he steers. To the unskilled the magnet is nothing but an ordinary piece of iron: to the navigator it is his pilot. So the Truth, which has guided millions of happy souls through the rocks and quicksands of the sea of life, and landed them safely in their proper home, is by the world unheeded while it anxiously seeks for its own ideal of Truth, but which, when presented to them, they scorn as the Jews did the Messiah, and in which they refuse to see anything more divine than is to be found in any other system of philosophy that has been propounded. There is no doubt the Jews were very earnest and anxious in their expectation of the Messiah, even at the very moment when He was dwelling amongst them, "despised and rejected of men." Truth-seekers now are earnest and anxious in their watching for the dawn of Truth, and yet that Truth is in their midst, like its great Source—poor, despised, undesirable in aspect, and rejected by the world's favourites. *Mere earnestness*, then, is not the

only qualification necessary in the search for Truth. This philosopher's stone is "hidden," and ever has been, "from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him," so subtle, so delicate, so refined, that it escapes the rude grasp of the bold speculator; so still and small is the voice that it is whispered only in the ear of him who puts off the shoes from his feet at the Temple's gate, and recognizes that the place whereon he stands is holy ground. Have you seen how gently and carefully the anatomist proceeds when searching amongst the springs of life, that delicate principle that eludes our grasp, yet is all around us? Have you watched the analyst in his search for subtle elements that would escape altogether a ruder observation? These should suffice to teach us, that holy dread and solemn awe become the man who would honestly set himself to find out God.

This nineteenth century has no lack of Truth-seekers, but the Truth-seekers have more than ever forgotten that Humility is of all qualifications the most indispensable to the man who would learn the secrets of the Unseen, and fathom even the shallowest waters that wash the shore on which we "pebble-pickers" wander, and wonder at the expanse that lies beyond.

We attempt in these pages to exhibit some of the workings of a mind that may be taken as the type of a large class of young, thoughtful, studious men of the day—men who, having had instilled into their minds the "Divine Right of Private Judgment," as the phrase is, have determined to shape out their own course of thought, cast off the prejudices of their education, and adopt as their motto for life, "Every man his own creed-maker." Most of the incidents

are strictly founded on facts that have come under the author's immediate notice. Once, he himself was a wanderer without the fold of Holy Church, and well he knows the path of a Truth-seeker is not strewn with flowers, though aware of nothing in the way of anxiety so easy to be borne, because so flattering to human pride as exercising the faculty of Rationalism. If any thoughtful mind shall be benefited by this effort to expose error, detect false views of truth and remove prejudices, the author will think himself well repaid for the hours of anxiety he has passed when groping after the light, and even reflect with satisfaction on his journey through the desert, if thereby he be the means of helping but one poor wanderer to the same land of rest in which he by God's mercy has at last found a settled home.

CHAPTER I.

EBENEZER CHAPEL, MERLINGTON.

EBENEZER was not situated up a court. Why meeting-houses of the Calvinistic persuasion should generally hide up courts is a mystery. One might think it was due to modesty, but that can hardly be the reason, as Calvinists are not generally overburdened with that grace. Our little Ebenezer had once lived the violet's life, and had bloomed unseen long enough, and at the time we introduce it to our readers' notice had recently emerged from its retirement and asserted its claims to the notice of the world at large, by pulling down the row of little chandlery shops that hid it from view, and extending the structure till it reached the street, with a fine Italian façade. For Ebenezer was looking up. Pastor Green had gone to his long account and was gathered to his fathers, or at any rate to his "brothers" and "sisters" in the faith, in the little dark and damp burying-ground beside the chapel. After many fruitless attempts to meet with a worthy successor, our somewhat fastidious Ebenezerites were "suited," as Deacon Smith observed. Not without much anxiety and debate on the part of the congregation was this important business accomplished. Merlington was a rising little town in the Midland counties, and there were some people of no mean standing in the place who patronized the Gospel according to Ebenezer. Now some of these good people, much as they "*were*

fed," as they termed it, under Brother Green's preaching, were inclined to the rather heretical idea that the doctrines of Free Grace would not lose their unction to any great extent if a more legitimate use of the letter H were imported into their pulpit ministrations, and that a little more Lindley Murray, even if it did spoil the flavour of some of their highly-spiced exhortations, would make them more palatable to the "occasional hearers" who dropped in. Moreover, some of the wealthier members had sons who learned Latin, and daughters well grounded in Mangnall's Questions and Lempriere's Dictionary, and it was not pleasant to hear them criticizing good old Mr. Green on their way home from chapel in terms that showed clearly that they held him in very small esteem for his learning, whatever they might think of his doctrine. He was a preacher of the old Strict Baptist school, had been in early life a shoemaker, but when about turning the middle point of life had received a "call," as he declared, to become an itinerant preacher. His reading was not extensive nor very varied. He was well up in the Old Testament Scriptures, especially Solomon's Song and the minor Prophets, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, and one or two writers of the sourest school of Puritans; besides, he had long subscribed to the periodical literature of his sect, and greedily devoured all that was to be had out of "The Earthen Vessel," "The Heavenly Manna Pot," and the "Believer's Bread Basket."[1] Fortified with this, he felt he could afford to despise "college learning," and considered himself fully competent to become the channel of "the Spirit" for teaching the elect in and around Merlington. He soon found he was "accept-

[1] All these publications have existed within the last few years.

able" to these good folks, and gradually gave up his cottage meetings in the country districts and confined his attention to the worshippers at Ebenezer, who in a few months, in solemn meeting assembled, elected him to be their pastor at 50*l.* per annum, besides perquisites, a quarter's notice or a quarter's pay on either side to be the plan of terminating the connexion, should such a proceeding ever become desirable. Brother Green had a wife and eight children, so he wisely continued the shoe business until he should make Ebenezer pay rather better, for he managed to make the "cure of soles" not altogether unprofitable, as it would have been an infallible proof of "reprobation" had an Ebenezerite patronized any other disciple of St. Crispin when their *understandings* needed his care.

He was what was generally known amongst Particular Baptists as a "High Doctrine Man,"—that is, he seldom condescended to descant on any subject that did not embrace one or other of the five points of Calvinism, viz., Predestination, Particular Redemption, Total Depravity, Effectual Calling, and Final Perseverance. If you had desired to make the poor man angry, you need only have presumed to hint at the necessity of good works for salvation, or have been daring enough to assert that man had free-will or power to comply with God's command to obey the Gospel. When he first began to preach, he sometimes found a slight difficulty with such words as he met with in the Bible of more than two syllables; and one day, reading and expounding as he facetiously termed it, the text "No *sorcerers*, &c., shall inherit the kingdom of God," he, being entirely unacquainted with so unfamiliar a word, mis-read it "*scorers*." Now that required a moment's reflection

ere the meaning could be clearly apprehended. At last the happy thought struck him that the passage was clearly directed against his Arminian opponents, who thought to run up a score of good works on the credit side of God's books, and he boldly gave it that interpretation, which, by the majority of his hearers, was eminently relished, and added to the list of their proof passages in favour of their great Reformer's teaching. Some of the better educated of the little flock were slightly shocked at this rendering, but recovered their equanimity by reflecting that it was "the weak things of this world" that the Scripture declared were "to confound the wisdom of men," and that "not many wise men after the flesh were *called*," so they swallowed the "scorer" gloss, and were not so hurt as they might have been when, a few months after, they were gravely informed that all the words in the Protestant version of the Holy Scriptures written in italics were intended to be *emphasized!* and in some cases they thought it *did* certainly improve the unction of the sentences. Pastor Green had presided over his Merlington flock for seventeen years, when the gout, from which he had suffered much during the later years of his pastorate, incapacitated him from preaching, and gave him a year's rest from pulpit work ere apoplexy carried him off. When he gave up his ministrations, some of the flock were for calling in the aid of the students from a newly-started Baptist college in London, as occasional supplies "*on trial*," but this was strenuously opposed by the stricter and elder members, on the ground that book-learning was only head-knowledge, and "didn't *feed* the souls of the hearers," however much it might tickle their fancy, and for the graver reason that study and reading hindered the "*free operation*"

of the Spirit; "for dead men's bones stewed down would never do to feed the Ebenezer flock that had feasted on the pure milk of the Word for so many years," was the forcible peroration to Deacon Sharpe's address on the subject that completely turned the scale against the college-men, for that time at least. They had not to wait long for a supply for their pulpit, however, as there were plenty of itinerant Hyper-Calvinist parsons to be had for *7s. 6d.* per Sunday and their food, with the addition of a shilling or two extra for their fare from the neighbouring town of Birmingham. But Ebenezer did not flourish under their supervision, as might have been desired, for many of the younger members of the congregation had made pastor Green's demise a plea for trying some of the smarter chapels in the town; and as the wiser of the elder brethren had been foiled in their attempts to import a little more learning into the place, they followed the young folks' example, and betook themselves "to fresh fields and pastures new," as their favourite hymnal expressed it.

Now Merlington had lately discovered some saline water-springs in her vicinity, which the faculty had declared of astounding effect in the cure of an infinite variety of human ills. Pamphlets were written, and letters appeared in the local journals expatiating on the marvels wrought by these healing waters, and the little town began to think itself of some importance in the world, and the influx of visitors soon made it necessary to think about extending its borders; above all, Nonconformity was liberally represented in the visiting element, and some very important Dissenting families having visited Merlington, took up their abode there, and set themselves to extend the "*causes*," [2] as they were

[2] A "cause" is a cant term for a church.

designated, to which they were respectively attached. It may be remarked, in passing, that there seems a wonderful power in saline springs of attracting Nonconformity and the disciples of the "Evangelical" school of the Anglican Establishment. Why ultra-Protestantism and salt water should go together, and what affinity Dissent should have for warm-baths, Bath-chairs, pump-rooms, and parades is another of the little problems we ask our readers' aid in solving.

Now all this salt water was the making of Ebenezer. Some of the Baptist visitors to the town were well-to-do, and they determined to revive the falling fortunes of the modest meeting-house. They found out the deacons and big men of the "*cause*," and promised them their support if things were a little more to their liking; so at last they were persuaded to try a sample or two of the Bunyan college men from London. The principal, the Rev. William Wightman, D.D., assured them he had some very sound divines amongst his young men, and if the Church at Merlington would forward a statement of their "views" to him, he was sure he should be able to suit them with a pastor, at any rate, after one or two trials. So they placed the matter in Dr. Wightman's hands, sent a little pamphlet containing a full and elaborate statement of their religious opinions, with scores of Scripture proof passages for every doctrine, and a neat little blank space, ruled off at the bottom of the last page, for the candidate for their pulpit to write his signature of assent in[8]. On the Saturday following their application, the five o'clock London train deposited on the Merlington platform a dapper little budding pastor, in a neat white tie, spruce cassock waistcoat, and a

[8] This is actually done.

solemn and decidedly professional black bag. He sought of the nearest porter the way to the house of the chief of the four deacons, who ruled affairs ecclesiastical at Ebenezer, where, having arrived, and having been duly welcomed and refreshed, he was located for his sojourn with the Merlingtonians.

On Sunday morning he preached. His text was from one of the Gospels. This augured badly with the old Ebenezerites, and when he announced the words, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments," they instantly steeled their hearts against him, and the eloquence with which they saw he could plead the cause of godly living. It was in vain they were told that the Gospel had claims on their *actions* as well as their *sentiments*, and that only a good life could be a passport to eternal joy. One aged brother rose and left the building, and many solemn glances in the pews beneath the pulpit plainly told the preacher that his doom was sealed as regards Merlington. Poor fellow! he was entirely ignorant of the cause of his offence, but he knew, by the absence of the nods of approval and other silent expressions of satisfaction that he was accustomed to, that he was not pleasing his hearers. Sermon over, and the benediction duly pronounced, he retired to his vestry, not, however, to be greeted by the warm hand-shaking that usually attended such an effort as he had been making that morning; no deacon came in to exclaim, "Blessed discourse, brother! The Lord bless you and your feedin' words!" No lady members to come and press his hand, and say, "We have had a feast of fat things, dear brother. I hope you'll come again." He waited fully five minutes, wondering what had been the cause of his failure, before one of his hearers disturbed his meditations. It was an old, grey-

haired gentleman from one of the side pews (*boxes* we had almost said), who came to ask him home to dinner. He had no other invitation, so he was open to accept this. From his host he soon discovered the reason of his failure. He was quietly informed that he was a very good preacher, as far as learning and ability went; but that he was not sound in the doctrine of Justification by Faith alone.

"How was it," said Mr. Walmsley, "that Dr. Wightman did not tell you our views? Had he not heard they were High Calvinists?"

"No," said the preacher. "He had been sent off at a moment's notice, and had no idea of their views at all."

Evening came, and not more than twenty persons were scattered over the area of the rather spacious chapel—a very neat way the Ebenezerites had of expressing disapprobation of their preacher's doctrines. Our young theologue was not sorry when Monday morning liberated him from Merlington. Dr. Wightman was speedily desired to be more careful in the selection he made next time; and on the following Sunday he sent them a man after their own heart. He preached from "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Deep in Predestination, he most effectually cut off all the rest of the Merlingtonians from eternal salvation, after assuring the Ebenezerites of *their* happy fate, and ended by giving out the hymn commencing,—

> "We are a garden, wall'd around,
> A little spot of hallow'd ground."

This was Elysium for the flock. They had heard nothing equal to it since the death of Pastor Green;

and at the close of the evening service they were for engaging him for three months on trial right off. He preached to them for that time, and satisfied them too; but they were doomed to a snubbing, for Mr. Silverton would hear of nothing less than 100*l.* a year stipend, and the utmost they could manage was 70*l.*, so they had to try again. And many were their mishaps. Some of the students were too learned, some too much Greek and Latin to be in any sense the "organ of the Spirit;" some were too young to be deep in the doctrines of grace, some had too little experience, and others too much imitation of certain fathers of the sect; and so ten months passed ere the man of their choice appeared.

And the man of their choice was the Rev. Albert James, B.A. At first it was likely that the B.A. appendage would have proved the undoing of its possessor. Baptist ministers in those days seldom went to college, and if they had gone would have found little to help them in attaining to University honours. However, Bunyan College had been affiliated to London University, and some of the more ambitious and persevering of the students had the hardihood to seek academical laurels. Albert James was a successful candidate; he was altogether superior in point of intellect to the common run of Dissenting parsons, and had been educated as a boy for the ministry, for which he had from early youth shown an aptitude. In religious principles he was a rigid Calvinist, clinging as firmly as his more ignorant *confrères* to Election and Predestination; but he did so in altogether a more refined and cultivated manner. To a handsome appearance and gentlemanly bearing he united a very poetic and thoughtful manner of expressing himself, so that when he first made his

appearance at Merlington he took the ladies' hearts by storm by his mere appearance, and made them all his willing subjects by his refined and spiritual eloquence. For it is to be noted that your regular Nonconformists —be they Baptist, Independent, or Wesleyan—are quite as susceptible to the arts of poetry and eloquence when they are made to pander to their peculiarities as their more orthodox brethren. Ebenezer did not so much object to "book-learning," when assured of the safety of its pet principles, nor to poetry and a telling delivery when spiced with enough "Free Grace" to make it palatable. So that though B.A. did look ominous at first, and savoured slightly of Oxford and the other "Parson Factories," as Deacon Sharpe called them, it was perfectly atoned for by Mr. James' sweet way of extracting heavenly manna out of Solomon's Song, and the Divine Unction from the prophet Amos. The artful young parson saw this at a glance, and only opened the New Testament to look for a text whilst on trial for his month at Ebenezer, on the two occasions that he administered strong doses of Predestination from the eighth of Romans. The Rev. Albert James, B.A., was rather great at the eighth of Romans. From this chapter he conclusively proved (at any rate to every Calvinist who heard him) that no Catholics, Episcopalians, Wesleyans, Quakers, and others outside the "little garden, walled around," could possibly be saved; and, though he put the matter in a more delicate way than his predecessor Green, he no less succeeded in convincing his hearers that the Lord had at last provided them with a shepherd to lead them to the green pastures provided for them by John Calvin and his followers.

So the ladies carried the day, not that the gentle-

men were very obstinate on the point, though one or two did think him a "dandy," and expressed themselves as half afraid that patent leather boots and kid gloves, with a silver-topped walking-stick, were rather "carnal;" but what were *their* opinions when the "Mothers' Meeting," the "Dorcas Society," the "Ebenezer Ladies' Auxiliary," and the "Society for Providing the Hullaboloo Indians with Crinolines," had all expressed themselves as perfectly satisfied both with the appearance and doctrines of the Rev. Albert James, B.A.?

In the middle ages it was enough to say, "Rome has spoken, the case is ended;" at Ebenezer it was equally certain that, when the ladies had decided a point, further argument was a work of supererogation.

So the orphaned flock found a pastor. Ebenezer put off its weeds and forthwith gave a tea-meeting in honour of their happy settlement, and just six months before the period at which our story commences Mr. James entered upon his duties. He soon succeeded in attracting a number of new people to the chapel. He kept his Calvinistic peculiarities so neatly in the back-ground after his engagement was concluded that he managed to please even those who were not exactly of his way of thinking, and to conciliate the more advanced disciples by occasional hints that sufficed to show the initiated that he had a strong reserve of orthodoxy ready for use at a moment's notice. So the pews let well, and things grew and prospered remarkably. Ever on the look-out for some event that should enable him to place himself and talents more prominently before the general inhabitants of the town, Mr. James was one day rewarded for his assiduity by a circumstance that

served to introduce him to public notice with considerable *éclat.*

The Rector of Merlington had for some months past been deep in the study of the "Tracts for the Times," which just then were making considerable noise in the world, and these essays had convinced him of the immediate necessity of rebuilding the Parish Church, setting up a surpliced choir, and coming out with High Church principles generally. The innocent Merlingtonians liked the idea of a new church, and didn't see any very great harm in the boys in the organ-loft going down into the chancel and singing there in surplices; and so Dr. Cooper seemed likely to have things all his own way—artful Puseyite as he was. But his dreams of Tractarianism were disturbed, for he had no sooner placed the matter before his parishioners than the Rev. Albert James saw his opportunity and determined to use it. He declared the rector's plan for rebuilding the church, and other innovations he had started, to be nothing more than a Jesuitical plot for introducing Popery to the town, and, in short, for handing over Merlington and the Merlingtonians, Ebenezer and all, to the dominion of the Scarlet Lady. This alarmed the inhabitants; the Protestant beacon-fires were lighted first at an Ebenezer tea-meeting, when many an extra cup of tea was swallowed by the ladies of the cause as they garrulously denounced Rome and all its emissaries. The tocsin of alarm was sounded, and the Calvinistic drums beat to arms, the enemy was already in their midst, and the "Muffin-fight," as Deacon Sharpe's naughty errand-boy profanely called the meeting, resolved itself into a council of war. Of course their new pastor was applauded for his vigilance in the cause of the Truth, and many were the compliments he received

that night for his sagacity and penetration in detecting the plans of the enemy. It was agreed that the music-hall, the largest public room in the town, should be hired forthwith, and that placards and posters should be issued, calling the Protestants generally to a meeting in defence of their threatened liberties. The proceedings found favour with the representatives of all the different sects in the town, and Wesleyans, Independents, Ranters and Baptists, though they vigorously assailed and denounced each other every other night in the year, met on the evening of the great Protestant meeting in the music-hall as amicably as the happy family of birds, cats and mice one occasionally sees perambulated through the streets, or exhibited at fairs. They even won over to their side, "for this night only," a certain venerable Episcopalian Baronet, who condescended to occupy the chair, so that the affair seemed likely to be eminently successful. The sensational placards brought together a large assembly, and more valiant old ladies of the Gamp and Harris type rattled applause at the racy and telling passages in the Baptist pastor's denunciation of Tractarianism than ever bore green umbrellas in Merlington on any religious occasion before. Mr. James drew such graphic pictures of the Smithfield martyrdoms, the rack, and the other instruments of popish torture, that the good Merlingtonians fairly trembled in their shoes as they listened to his awe-inspiring words; even the very children in the hall, as they tremblingly drew closer to their mothers' sides, conceived a deeper hatred of Popery than their Sunday-school teachers had ever succeeded in instilling into their infant minds. Mr. James was followed by another minister, who declared he had paid a visit to the Parish Church, and had

with his own eyes seen a pair of candlesticks on the communion table, which piece of ecclesiastical joinery was vested in a velvet cover, embroidered with—oh, horrible to tell!—a gold cross! At this point a gentleman rose in the assembly to ask if he had seen the candles lighted. No, not lighted, replied the speaker, nor could he positively assert that any one whom he knew had seen them lighted; still, what was the use of candlesticks without candles, or of candles except to light? so that, doubtless, there were certain mysterious ceremonies conducted by their Jesuitical vicar, to which the general public were not admitted, when this Romish apparatus was called into play. Knowing looks and expressive gestures were exchanged between the Gamps and Harrises, and the conspiracy was considered duly proved. At this point, who should appear in the meeting but the vicar himself, who demanded to be heard in self-defence, but was received with such an overwhelming storm of hisses and groans, that it was long before order was restored, and leave obtained for him to speak. He assured the meeting that he hated Rome as much as they did—that he had no intention of tampering with the Protestantism of Merlington; protested that he was not a Jesuit in disguise, nor was receiving a single penny from the Pope; that his candles were never lighted—that, indeed, they were only dummies, cylinders of wood nicely turned, that were only for ornament, as he would be pleased to show any one who took the trouble to call upon him. His explanation only made matters worse; the audience considered their vicar as afraid to show himself in his true colours, were more convinced than ever of his Jesuitical proclivities, and forthwith determined to send a solemn protest to his bishop. A vote of thanks was given to Pastor James for his bold and vigilant

conduct, resolutions were passed that fully vindicated the Protestantism of the Merlington folk, and the rector's plan for restoring and rebuilding his church had, in consequence, to remain in abeyance.

All this was the making of Ebenezer. Next Sunday morning they had a sermon, according to previous announcement, on "The Glorious Doctrines of the Reformation." The building was crowded in every part, and such was the eloquence of the preacher, and the ardour of his Protestant zeal, that it was evident Ebenezer was destined to see better days. And soon many of the disaffected from the Parish Church came to take sittings at Ebenezer, as they considered Mr. James a safer guardian of their principles than Dr. Cooper with his unlit candles and becrossed altar-furniture.

At last it became necessary to set about enlarging the chapel itself, and as many of the congregation were in favour of putting a more modern and fashionable appearance on the place, it was resolved to repair and otherwise improve it; and this is how it came to pass that Ebenezer emerged from its retirement, and from an old-fashioned dull and gloomy meeting-house became the most important of all the Merlington sectarian places of worship.

CHAPTER II.

WIDOW PATTISON AND HER FAMILY.

AMONGST those who left the Parish Church when the innovations commenced was a widow-lady named Pattison, with her son and daughter, Henry and Lucy.

It is this Henry Pattison who is to be the hero of our story. Mrs. Pattison had retired to Merlington on the death of her husband, partly that she might nurse her heavy sorrow in secret, and partly that she might eke out her slender income in the seclusion of a country town, free from the necessity of endeavouring to keep up the more expensive style of living that Mr. Pattison's professional income had enabled them to support. Of a courageous and indomitable spirit, she bravely determined to live for her children; all else that was dear to her in life was gone; but was there not a noble life-work before her to educate and fit for doing battle with the world these orphans? for the little ones lost their father when still too young to know their loss. When death had robbed this family of its bread-winner, and the first wild anguish had subsided, and left the widow free to collect her thoughts and arrange her plans, she found herself possessed of an income that would give her something over 150*l.* per annum. Having resolved out of this sum annually to save a considerable portion, she wisely concluded to leave London and settle down in some quiet country place where she would be free to practise the strictest economy and develope the plans she had formed for training to habits of industry and virtue her youthful and all-absorbing charge.

It not unfrequently happens that even thoughtless and extravagant persons, when suddenly thrown upon their own responsibilities, become altogether changed, and the flood of sorrow that would have entirely overwhelmed weaker minds serves only to lift upon its breast and elevate to nobler things some whom we should have expected would have succumbed to its influence. It was so in this case. People said, when

the young and giddy Matilda Pattison was left to fight the stern battle of life alone, that it would break her heart. How could *she* live without her card parties, theatres, morning concerts, and autumn tours? She who had been used to the comforts and even the luxuries of life, would never (so the world said) brave the storm and face the cold wind of adversity, and battle through it all with her little charge. But the widow mapped out her course, and trusted to Providence for the rest; and though she had no heavenly comfort to sustain her then, for hitherto the world alone had occupied her attention, and thoughts of God were the last thoughts that entered her mind, and prayer, that has saved so many millions of hearts from breaking, was a solace of which she was almost ignorant; yet she was not entirely godless; she was the child of parents who "professed and called themselves Christians." But, alas! the canker worm of Calvinism had done its evil work with them also. They had never taught their children to pray, had never trained their infant lips and minds to address the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth by the precious name of *Father:* they said if their children were "of the election of grace," as they termed it, God would have His own, and that it was sheer blasphemy to teach children who might be born reprobates to address God in words that must be left to the Holy Spirit to instil, if ever they were to learn them. So they let the little plants run wild in the wilderness of this world, trusting to God "to transplant them into the garden of His invisible Church, if He in His sovereign mercy should see fit to do so." No holy baptism enriched their souls with the privileges of the Christian dispensation, no priest of God signed their foreheads with the symbol of our common faith; they

were worse off than the children of the Patriarchs, and though the Christ of God had said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not," and His Apostle, "The promise is to you and to your children;" these babes, with thousands more of their cold and stern sect, were deprived of their inheritance, and all knowledge of God's good will towards them. It was not unnatural, therefore, that Matilda Pattison should grow up with little love for religion as burlesqued before her. She knew nothing whatever of the pure and holy faith of the Gospel of Christ. The message that Jesus the Son of God's love gave to the world was perverted into a miserable, cruel, and unjust mockery of man's misery and ruin, by the teachers of her parents' creed, that was equally insulting to the blessed God, and destructive of all hope of reformation to the souls of men. A wretched fatalism that held up to her desire a heaven for which she dared not presume to hope, unless steeped in that overweening pride that seems the *sine qua non* of the "elect," had well nigh driven to despair one whom nature had formed well calculated, under better influences, "to adorn the doctrine of Jesus Christ." A liberal share of sound common sense fortunately entered into her composition, and convinced her that whatever system of religious belief was the true one, it certainly could not be *that* which cast a heavy pall of gloom over the parents' house, and forbade them to see in life anything but the "wretched land" and "waste howling wilderness" on which their favourite preachers loved to descant.

It is not to be denied, and neither can it be wondered at, that the children of parents who are followers of Calvinism pure and unadulterated, generally turn out either infidels or persons of notoriously bad

character. Setting at nought the Wise Man's advice to "Train up a child in the way he should go," they leave their children to themselves; sin developes itself in them unchecked and unrestrained by any good influence or example, and it is no wonder that Satan makes an easy prey of them.

That it was not so in this case was a great mercy for which Matilda Pattison, in after-life, had cause for unfeigned thankfulness. No thanks to those who should have trained her soul in early life for God, it happened that the crushing blow she sustained in the loss of her husband eventually led her to think about that God whom she had never yet dared to love. She had no sooner escaped from her parents' influence, than she abandoned altogether the services of their religion, and when she entered any place of worship at all she had been in the habit of attending the parish church.

Soon after settling at Merlington she went to hear Dr. Cooper preach. He had many pulpit qualifications, was an earnest, and, as far as his light enabled him to be, a faithful preacher, in every way well calculated to be of service in combating and conquering the evil influences of the widow's early training. Under him she unlearned in some measure the soul-destroying doctrines of her parents' teaching; began to look upon God not as a Pagan deity, only to be propitiated with the destruction of the work of His hands; and dared to hope, that as the angels on that first and joyful Christmas-tide had announced, "Peace on earth, good will towards men," she might find a Saviour's welcome if sought at a Saviour's feet.

How she longed to unburthen her sorrowful heart into some sympathizing ear! She told her soul's sad

story to her God in secret, but she wanted advice, consolation, above all, instruction in Christian doctrine. How was she to obtain all this? To call upon the vicar uninvited and without any introduction was too bold a step for her to undertake. Besides, how did she know he would sympathize with her? His work was to read prayers and preach sermons, not to listen to the tales of weary and sorrow-stricken women, doing life's work alone and uncared for. Had Jesus still been here, she would have pushed her way through the crowd to Him whom she had at last begun to love, and from whom she would have sought that pardon He never denied to penitent sinners. But He had left no one commissioned, as she could see, to speak comfort to the soul and bid her go in peace. The Prayer Book did say something about it in the Exhortation in the Communion Service, which invitation for ghostly counsel the parson occasionally read, because she thought the Act of Parliament compelled him to do so; but she had never heard of anybody accepting the invitation, and was not by any means assured, that were she to take Dr. Cooper at his word, she would be at all an acceptable visitor.

There was something more about it in the service for the Visitation of the Sick, and those who were at the point of death; but as she was just then in neither of these predicaments, she naturally concluded that her case was not met by this arrangement, so determined to let matters go on as they were. She said nothing of her religious convictions to any one. Considering that no man cared for her soul, she learned to commune in secret with God to the best of her ability, read her Bible and tried to understand it, prayed as the Prayer Book directed, and generally comported herself as became a steady-going, quiet

and respectable church-goer; not quite at rest in her mind, but praying humbly to be led into the way of peace. It was about this time that Mr. James was making his attack on Dr. Cooper and his High Church tendencies, and Mrs. Pattison was induced to attend the great Protestant demonstration at the music-hall; for if there was one thing that, more than another, her parents had succeeded in fixing deeply in her mind, it was an utter, complete, and thorough-going hatred of Popery and all its belongings. She left the hall that night convinced that it was highly dangerous to trust herself any longer to Dr. Cooper's ministrations, and, as Mr. James was so very attractive and popular in his style, was soon persuaded by a lady friend who was one of his congregation to try him for a few Sundays. She went, and, strange to say, much as she had disliked the Calvinism of her home, Calvinism as presented by the attractive manner of the Rev. A. James was not quite so unsuited to her then. He had a way of administering religion in its *comforting aspect*. He drew such delightful pictures of the ease and joy that attended the path of the believer who gave up all idea of getting to heaven by the aid of good works, that she was fain to accept his assurance that she need "only believe" and her salvation was certain without any other condition whatever. No self-examination, no tears of repentance, no watchfulness over the hidden springs of the heart, no contesting the every step of the way against the world, the flesh, and the devil; "only believe," and the thing was settled. All was done for her, she was assured, and there was nothing more for her to do than to accept the "finished work of Christ." This being very plausibly put, with an entire absence of the cant phrases she had long been

used to from the more illiterate teachers who had been her parents' spiritual guides, she had little difficulty in making Ebenezer her home, and forthwith took a snug pew there for herself and family. The more subdued tone of the Ebenezer teaching at this time was such as to admit of some care and attention being bestowed on the young people of the flock. A Sunday School was established there, and Pastor James had a Bible Class for the more advanced scholars in his own vestry. To this Bible Class Mrs. Pattison sent her son Henry, who at the time he comes before us is twelve years old. We shall make his acquaintance in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III.

A BOY'S RELIGION.

You may muse for ever about children, and find something fresh to think on and wonder at. A child *is* something very wonderful. A human soul—a priceless gem, in such a fragile casket, and the treasure itself, so mysterious and so awful in its nobleness—how came it there? we ask, as we look at a child, and wonder if, in that particular instance, and in every of the myriads of other cases, God breathed directly the Divine or immortal spirit into the earthly tabernacle, or whether the soul was transmitted from Adam, as the body.

There is so much of heaven about a child that we like to think the little spark of Divinity fresh from its source. We cannot bring ourselves to think that the innocent and smiling babe, the offspring of perhaps

wicked and cruel parents, partakes of their tainted soul, as it does of their diseased bodies. No, we incline rather to the opinion of him who sang,—

"O thou bright thing, fresh from the hand of God,
The motions of thy dancing limbs are sway'd
By the unceasing music of thy being!
Nearer I seem to God when looking on thee.
'Tis ages since He made His youngest star.
His hand was on thee as 'twere yesterday,
Thou later revelation! Silver stream,
Breaking with laughter from the lake divine
Whence all things flow!" O bright and singing babe,
What wilt thou be hereafter?

Ay, hereafter! Why, if thou diest now, ere thou hast breathed the sin-tainted atmosphere of this lower world, and inhaled the poisonous breath of earth, thou wilt go back to thy bright blue home above, as naturally as the sparkling dew of summer morn mounts its sunbeam chariot and returns to the heavens it only left last night.

But if thou livest, why then all our poetry and romance, and fine sentimental talk, will go for nought. Thou wilt probably be just as passionate, cruel, tyrannical, dishonest, and generally wicked as the rest of us, who are not silver streams, nor dew-drops, nor any thing else than fallen men.

For the sinful, innate bias to evil that lurks under the beautiful form of the loveliest babe that ever mother caressed soon begins to manifest itself, and malice and spite, cruelty, greediness, and falsehood, spring up from the germs of sin secreted in our ruined nature.

Notwithstanding all this, the poets have a good deal on their side, and the heaven-infused nature, under careful culture, will assert its claims over these corrupt influences in a Christian child.

One remarkable thing about children is their love for the supernatural and the heavenly. How correctly, and almost instinctively, they seem to appreciate the being and attributes of God. If you ask a little child who made anything that it thinks grand and beautiful, the probability will be that it will reply, God. The child seems to be anxious that God should have the honour of everything beautiful it sees. And then the angels, and the clouds, and the stars, and everything that is heavenly, are such themes for a child's musing. They never tire of hearing about them. Oh, well might the Saviour say, "Woe to those who shall give scandal to one of these little ones."

With such vast capabilities for good, what may not a Christian child become when carefully trained for God! All seems ready for our hand; there is the prepared soil and the good seed. True, the enemy has already sowed tares there, but they may be eradicated; and great will be the reward of those who help to raise a good harvest for heaven's garners.

There are few things harder than to educate a child properly. Agriculture, one would think, were easy enough; and yet there is room for the display of a large amount of scientific knowledge in the management of a small farm.

The education of a child seems a simple matter; yet to do all that might be done with a little one in making it useful to the world and fit for its return to God, might well task the skill of the greatest of philosophers. There are more charlatans who set up for teachers of children than curers of diseases. When an ignorant and uncultivated young person fails to make a living by her laundry or her toy-shop, she immediately adds a small school! When apartments, or greengrocery, or newspapers, do not suffice to keep

things going, a few pupils are the *dernier ressort.* This ought not to be. Why prosecute the man who sets up as surgeon or physician without qualification, and let any one who chooses drop the flat-iron or the yard measure to don the ferrule?

As the mind is of more value than the body, common sense should at least teach us that the mind-doctor ought to have his diploma of fitness, ere he hangs out "Academy for Young Gentlemen."

In tracing out the workings of Henry Pattison's mind one must be guided, to some extent, especially during his earlier years, by such help as his diary will afford. At the commencement of this very irregularly-kept book we find a rather lengthy account of his youthful religious impressions, a few extracts from which will be necessary to enable us correctly to understand his character and mental struggles. He says in one place, when writing of his past life:—

"My father died before I was old enough to remember him. My first impressions of home-life are connected with my dear mother and my little sister Lucy, soon after we went first to Ebenezer Chapel at Merlington.

"I was very young when I learned to read, and remember that I was always passionately fond of books. I can recollect the first book my mother gave me was a Bible. I learned to read it at her knee. I can readily recall my feelings when I first read the story of the Crucifixion. How sorry I was for the blessed Jesus; how angry with the wicked Jews! The Book of Revelation, with its awful prophecies, its angels, and dreadful horses, and lakes of fire, and smoke of torment, was my favourite study. Of course I understood nothing of it, and nobody, as far as I can remember, attempted to explain it. But

I know it had a great effect on my mind; and it could not have been right to let me read it so young: it made me dream horrible dreams of hell and the devil, of which I had been told a great deal. I know that I was afraid of God, and trembled of a night, when put to bed, about the last day, and how I should fare if I were to die. Then I read strange things in the Old Testament about killing thousands of people, even little babies, at the command of God; of terrible wars conducted for the purpose of making room for the Jews; and this seemed to tally ill with what my teacher said good people ought to do. I can see now why all these things were written, but cannot think it was right to fill a child's mind with slaughter and blood, before he could possibly understand anything about it. And when I went to the Bible Class I remember with shame how we lads would take a pride in searching out, on the sly, for passages to laugh at and deride, and can trace little if any good effect from such undue familiarity with sacred things. I think every good purpose would have been served if careful selections had been made from Holy Scripture for our reading, and the rest left till we were old enough to know how to appreciate it. Again, whenever I was very naughty, and a severe punishment was required for me, I was locked in a room by myself, and set to learn a number of verses from the Holy Book, till at last I grew to detest the sight of what was to me an instrument of torture. This could not be right. What sort of use I made of the Book of Proverbs may be gathered from the fact, that on several occasions, when angry with my poor, worried mother, I quoted against her, young scapegrace as I was, passages from the Book of Proverbs that were not complimentary to the 'contentious woman!'

"I was still very young when I began to worry myself about the doctrine of election; a pretty subject for a child's mind! I heard so much about it at chapel and at home, that I soon became familiar with the cant phrases used by my elders, and wondered if I was elect or not, or whether I had not better make up my mind that I was not a 'child of grace.' All this must have had a very bad effect upon me. One good thing, however, I learned as a child, and that was to have a very great confidence in prayer to Almighty God; so much so was this the case that I used to make a very singular use of it. I used to pray for success when fishing, or that I might not be found out when in mischief, promising it should be the last time if I got out of it safely; and indeed, on any and every occasion, good, bad, and indifferent, I used to address myself to Heaven.

"There is no doubt this habit was, on the whole, of great benefit to me, for I came very sensibly to realize the presence of God, and His fatherly care over us, and in after-life the good effect of this preserved me in many a trial.

"Many things happened in answer to my little prayers that convinced me God heard them. Once I had lost or mislaid a certain key, and was to have been punished for my carelessness if I could not find it. I went to bed that night very unhappy, but my last sigh before I laid down on my pillow was that God would tell me where the key was by the morning. In the middle of the night my dear mother awoke me, telling me she had dreamed she saw the lost key in one of the bed-rooms, and consequently got up and looked there, and, lo, it was as she had dreamed. I was very glad, but certainly not much surprised, for I had faith enough to believe God would certainly hear

me. The worst of all this was that I began to think such things a proof that I was one of the elect, and to be filled with a spiritual pride that must have made me very hateful in God's sight. Thinking I was a favourite of God and a 'plant of grace,' flourishing in the 'garden walled around,' I began to look down on such of my playfellows as I thought were without the sacred enclosure. There is no doubt I was very justly considered an offensive young hypocrite. I know that I rather despised and pitied my sister Lucy, as it was generally considered she showed evident signs of reprobation, although she was even as a child of a most sweet and amiable disposition. But she did not talk so much about religion as I had learned to do, knew very little about the Bible, and was not fond of praying;—not that I ever inconvenienced myself about my prayers. I was naturally a lazy child, and had no sooner escaped from maternal supervision at bed-time, than I gave up saying my prayers (merely the Lord's prayer and anything else that was short, that I could extemporize for the occasion on the Nonconformist plan), until I was snugly ensconced between the bed-clothes, and generally went to sleep long before I had finished even this short exercise. In the morning, I sometimes prayed while dressing, but never formed a constant habit of morning prayer as a child or youth. I can see now that my Baptist bringing up exercised a most pernicious effect upon me. For such religion as I had, had little or no influence for good upon my daily actions. I was often very disobedient and troublesome to my mother, appropriated her halfpence without remorse, and if detected told lies without scruple, to escape punishment, and was altogether a bad child. Being a quick observer, a ready imitator, and of an artful disposition,

I had no difficulty in copying the manner and the cant phrases of my elders, and soon succeeded in making them believe I was what they called 'a gracious child.' Some compared me to Samuel, who was an elect infant; and others to Timothy, because from a child I had known the Holy Scriptures; and all agreed, notwithstanding my conduct, that I was one of the Lord's own people."

Such was Henry Pattison at the time we introduce him to the public. We only fear that our readers will throw up his history in disgust, and refuse to follow the fortunes of one who comes before them in so disagreeable a light. But we must say a word in defence of the poor lad. The question is, Could anything better be expected from such a training? The wonder is he turned out at last as we shall show he did. One could not have been surprised had he remained the hypocrite he was, or turned in after-life from religion altogether with nausea, after such experiences. He had the example of an excellent and pious mother, and this alone saved him. He never saw in any one else Christianity in action. There was unlimited cant, but the "godliness" he saw was a mere burlesque. The professors only differed in conduct from those they were pleased to call "reprobates," "sinners," "worldlings," or "the ungodly," by a longer and more miserable face, especially in chapel; by a scrupulous and almost Jewish keeping of "the Sabbath;" by possessing exceedingly greasy and dog's-eared Bibles, quotations from which formed a large portion of their conversation; by making long prayers in the chapel vestry, or groaning assent when others prayed; in talking as glibly about the counsels of God as though they were His confidants; and by proving that they were not "under the law" but "under grace;" by cheating

their neighbours, and scandalizing Christianity in almost every possible way. Did a "brother" by idleness and extravagant living manage to become bankrupt, and pay 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound, he made equally long prayers at the Monday night meeting, and sang,

"Lord, what a wretched land is this,
It yields us no supplies,"

with as much fervour as in his more prosperous days.

Did an elder or a deacon show his appreciation of the patriarchal multiplicity of wives, he was suspended if the scandal became known; but when the old rake sobered down, and expressed his contrition, he was restored to his office, and his faults were amiably put down to the score of human weakness and frailty. How touchingly he would read the hymn, "Farewell ye joys of earth, farewell!" The money-grubber, hard, cruel, stern, and selfish, would thank God he was not as other men; chuckle that he was going to heaven himself, without a thought of helping anybody else there; and give out the lines,—

"Jewels to me are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust,"

with as much apparent sincerity as if he were a hermit. Did the leader of the singing find the "Eight Bells" or the "Blue Anchor" too attractive to pass unvisited on his way to chapel, it interfered in no way with the emphasis he placed on the words,

"What various hindrances we meet
In coming to the mercy-seat!"

Henry had only been a few months in the Bible class at Ebenezer, when Mrs. Smith, the deacon's wife (Mrs. Deacon Smith she dearly loved to be called), suggested that it was quite time for him to think about becoming a "Teacher" in the Sunday-school. This

pleased our hero immensely, and he entered with alacrity on his new duties. These were to hear a class of six lads, a year or two younger than himself, read chapters from the Old or New Testament, as the case might be, explain them as best he could, make remarks, deliver short theological lectures on the subject in hand, and generally to superintend the religious training of his pupils! Pretty stiff work this for a child under fourteen years of age! An excellent title for the Ebenezer Sunday-school would have been "The Ebenezer Association for the development of Precocious Urchins," for surely the system must have been vastly injurious to the number of boys and girls who were promoted to the office of "Teacher," who themselves sadly needed instruction in the merest rudiments of Christianity. We shall hear what he says on this point himself:—

"This Sunday-school teaching did me great harm, it filled my little mind with pride, and gave me notions far above my years. How utterly unfit was I to teach religion to these poor children, who were each probably much better Christians than myself. Did I repress angry and unkind feelings at home? Was I striving to love God with all my heart? Did I abstain from lying and petty acts of dishonesty because they were sinful and displeasing to God? Was I pure in my thoughts and conversation? On the contrary I was passionate, spiteful, untruthful, and corrupt in word and deed.

"What good things then could I teach these poor little ones? Alas, I was myself utterly ignorant of holiness, though entrusted with the office of spiritual director to the Ebenezer Chapel fourth class boys."

But it does not seem that much teaching is expected in these schools, at least not in many of them, or

other instruments would naturally be employed. Providing the children are kept quietly sitting on their forms spelling out, "Zorobabel begat Abiud, and Abiud begat Eliakim," from half-past nine to eleven on Sunday morning, then made patiently to assist at the dreary morning service, with two hours more penance in the afternoon on the same piece of form, or toeing the same line on the school floor, every purpose, it is considered, is served by their attendance. Of course the juvenile teacher has enough to do to repress the impatience and vivacity of his pupils, a task that in Henry Pattison's hands appeared no easy one.

He says, "The boys being only a little younger than myself, cared for nothing I could say, and many were the reprimands I received from the Superintendent of the school for the noisiness of my class.

"The only way I could keep them quiet was by showing them pictures of some kind, which never failed to arrest their attention. I remember once getting a picture of the Crucifixion, which interested them immensely, and did them I am convinced far more good than the mere reading of the story of the Passion from the Gospels; for at this they were shuffling about, laughing, and entirely inattentive, but at the exhibition of the picture they were instantly quieted and subdued; one lad wiped a sly tear from his dirty face on the back of his hand, and all seemed to feel some sympathy for the Saviour. They listened after that attentively to what I had to say about the death of Jesus."

Henry had been a teacher about twelve months when it was suggested to him that if he wanted to go to heaven when he died, he must be what his Baptist friends termed "converted." It was explained to him that the process would be something

as follows, always premising that if it were God's will he would be "converted," if it were not he would remain "a sinner." First, he must be very anxious about his soul, very much alarmed at the contemplation of his lost state by nature, in great dread that hell would be his portion, and that he would be justly punished by being condemned thither.

So far good; but then it was represented to him that he, a child in Christian England, was as badly off as the child of heathen parents; that he was the Devil's property, and would remain so till he became "converted," just the same as though he were born in China or Japan, in some place where the Gospel had never reached. He could not help himself, he was told, and no one else could help him; "God would do His own work in His own way at His own time," it was said; and until he had experienced a certain amount of "conviction," which was a very horrible state of mind to be in (just as portrayed in the opening chapter of the Pilgrim's Progress, where the Dreamer finds himself in the City of Destruction), there was no hope for him—of course he might die before this took place, then he would be lost—but he might pray for conviction, and so he did.

This conviction he was told ought properly to come from hearing a startling sermon preached, and if he felt very wretched and miserable after it, and that feeling remained, the next step would be to see the minister, tell him the text and the particular part of the sermon that had affected him, and get his opinion on his mental state. He was given to understand that people generally cried a great deal at this stage, especially in their first interview with the minister, and this was considered a very hopeful sign. If the conviction were deep enough, conversion would follow, sooner

or later, but it was expected to be later at Ebenezer. Perhaps after twelve months waiting, if conviction remained, and a great desire to be baptized by total immersion and go to heaven soon after, supervened, the "inquirer," as he would be called, might consider himself safe. He would be dipped if the pastor thought proper; would join the church, if on appearing in person before all the members he could relate a satisfactory experience, to convince them that he had undergone enough mental anxiety the members voted him in; and be admitted to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper without further question.

Henry saw that all this was expected of him; he came to understand that he could not be a Christian without it, that he might as well be a Teloogoo Indian as an English child, till this had taken place.

Now whatever else Henry Pattison might not be, it is certain that from an early age he was very anxious to get to heaven somehow or other. Fear of hell, doubtless, had a great deal to do with it; but the love of God was not altogether absent from his mind.

We shall give what follows in his own words:—

"I was about fourteen when my dear mother began to talk to me a great deal about my being converted. She said I was quite old enough, she thought, to be baptized, but that I must be converted first. Some of the ladies connected with Ebenezer talked to me in a similar manner, and I readily saw all this was expected of me, and that I should be looked upon as an especially bad child if I did not undergo it. I was very timid, and I distinctly remember that the only thing that alarmed or disconcerted me about the matter was the necessity of appearing before the Church and publicly relating my 'experience.' I had

heard that in some places this difficulty could be got over by writing, and asked if I could send a letter instead of appearing in person in the event of my getting converted, and was answered in the negative. I was certainly very desirous of going to heaven after death, but I think it was only because hell was the other alternative, for I was certainly not progressing in holiness. I was also very anxious to appear well in the sight of my friends, and wanted to 'join the Church,' as it was called, very much. So I determined to try and get anxious and excited in the matter; and a month or two after my instructions as to the nature of conversion, I certainly did feel more alarmed than usual as to the safety of my soul. While Mr. James was preaching about the lost in hell; from the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, it was not at all wonderful that I should be frightened at the graphic and startling way in which he described the torments of the poor wretch who called in vain for a drop of water to cool his burning tongue. I determined to see the minister at the earliest opportunity. I spoke to my mother about it. She was delighted, and gave me a note to him, and I went. He was a proud and haughty man, very stiff and formal, and his reception chilled me. He heard what I had to say, asked me a few questions, and bade me call again soon. Nothing daunted, I went again the following week. He asked me first what I thought of baptism by immersion. Knowing that was one of his cardinal doctrines, of course I replied that every other sort of baptism was not baptism at all. This evidently pleased our pastor, and he then asked me with a searching look, 'Whether I thought that I was eternally predestinated to be saved?[1]'

[1] This question was actually put to a youth who applied for

"This was rather too much for me; still I had a vague idea, from conversations I had heard, that converted people always did think so. So I answered, 'I think it is very likely.' This evidently was not so well. It should have been expressed with more humility I found afterwards. He asked me what passages of Scripture were most 'laid upon my mind.' I gave him four or five (they had been his texts for some Sundays past, and were all that I remembered); still he was not satisfied, and ended by telling me that he did not think I was converted, because every body who came to him in that state shed many tears. This was a great blow to my hopes, especially when he told me to wait twelve months before I thought of baptism. I left his little room without one encouraging word, and wondered why it was God had made it so hard to get converted.

"Going home, I gave up all idea of conversion for some time to come, though I said my prayers more regularly and read my Bible more assiduously. I was convinced that Mr. James held a 'boy's religion' in very small esteem, and resolved that even if I did join a Church, it should not be that over which he presided."

Now, after perusing this, we appeal to our readers: Is this theory of conversion or regeneration the New Testament teaching? Was it the teaching of the early Church? Apart from the question of deferring baptism until the candidate has undergone sufficient "experience" to satisfy his examiners—for that is confined to the sect of Baptists—this notion of conversion is the prevailing one that exists amongst all

admission to a Baptist church in London, and the answer was really given as recorded here.

Dissenters and the adherents of the Evangelical party in the Anglican Establishment, and it is worth while for our Protestant readers calmly and seriously to reflect how far it is a correct view.

CHAPTER IV.

CHOOSING A RELIGION.

PROVIDED a man remains a good Protestant, and consistently eschews everything connected with popery, he may, without much fear of persecution in these liberal days, connect himself with any of the multitude of sects that in this country court his patronage. However fastidious his taste in religious matters, he can be suited with a religion as neatly as a lady with a new bonnet on Ludgate Hill. If he be transcendental and philosophic in his views, he can be a Broad Churchman or a Unitarian. Is he sensual, selfish, and coarse, he can be a Hyper-Calvinist. Is he ardent in his zeal for converting his neighbours, or ambitious of varying the attitude of hearer by occasionally becoming the preacher, he can be a Methodist. Is he respectable, conservative, and very proper, he can be a Low Churchman, a most certain method of escaping criticism and avoiding controversy. Who quarrels with a Low Churchman? He is like the good-natured dog nobody owns, but every one pats and says "Poor fellow" to. We quarrel with High Churchmen, we denounce Ritualists, we argue with Nonconformists, we hate Papists, but your Low Churchman is of such a very neutral tint we scarce know he is of any religion at all; he keeps it to himself so nicely, he never goes

rushing off to church while other people are minding their business at home, he never pokes tracts about "Highway Robbery" or the "Evils of Drunkenness" in young ladies' faces; all that he does in the way of religion is so strictly in accordance with the "Act in that case made and provided," that he treads on nobody's toes, and hurts nobody's feelings. As a rule though, if any one thinks much about religion, and he comes in a manner to make it the business of his life, the State religion becomes insufficient; the Act never provided for the man getting warm over "Common Prayer." The Privy Council evidently intended religious persons to rise no higher than "Dearly beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places;" and if certain rash, ill-advised, and hot-headed individuals choose to let their devotion carry them beyond that, they violate the rubrics, and must perforce make a church for themselves contrary to the statute! So the State Church has not succeeded in keeping within her pale more than half of the population of England at the present day; the consequence is that the other half suit themselves in an endless variety of ways with a religion, and if one is not made to their hands they start another and become its first apostle.

Henry Pattison having met with a rebuff in his attempt to get baptized at Ebenezer, made up his mind to look about him for awhile, and test the claims of the other religions represented at Merlington. He had occasionally been to the parish church to hear the singing, which in spite of the anti-Puseyite opposition had of late become exceedingly ornate in style, the rest of the worship corresponding with it.

To hear the singing we said, for Henry was passionately fond of music, especially sacred music; and of

that, chanting had for him the greatest charm: an extract from his diary proves this:—

"My schoolmaster was a churchman, and we had to learn the Collect for the Sunday and say it on Monday morning. The acquaintance with the Prayer Book which this made necessary, sometimes led me to visit the parish church, not altogether with the approval of my mother; but the services of the Church of England, as interpreted by the clergy of All Saints', had a certain charm for me, that led me sometimes to slip off on the sly and indulge in what was to me a real treat—a little good chanting. They chanted all the Psalms, and my delight was to lift up my little voice with the worshippers in the grand old words of David set to worthy melody. I knew this was considered by my friends a very shocking thing to do, but I never heard any reason given against the practice; and young as I was, I never saw the Psalms in print but I must hum a chant to the words. I have been to that church often when sad, or out of temper, or melancholy, and always came away cured of my little troubles. There was a soothing influence in the beautiful building, and the pealing music and wailing melodies, and the graceful character of the worship, that never failed to make me love good things and good people more. I could understand this worship best, could enter into it heart and soul, but I never could do this at Ebenezer. I thought by-the-bye this was a sign that the parish church service was the childish affair my friends said it was, and that the incomprehensible prayers of half an hour's duration each, with the many drawling hymns and hour long sermons with many divisions, were proofs of the superior and more elevated character of Dissenting worship. I could not understand the latter,

so I thought all the better of it—thought of it as a very intellectual thing—though I *liked* the Church service a thousand times better. I could never join in the minister's prayers at chapel, they appeared to me sermons delivered in a more pompous and melancholy tone; but at church the prayers were so simple that I could *pray* them, and feel I had spoken to God in them. Often have I looked back to my youthful Sundays at this church; many a time I used almost to pray that soft and solemn solos might occur in the well-beloved anthems I so delighted to hear. I did not care for the organ when it thundered out its trumpet-notes,—I liked best the tender passages; and when these came I would watch the great stained glass windows over the altar, where the saints were painted—the Evangelists, and Our Lady with the Holy Babe—and I would fancy myself in heaven, and think I was hearing the angels and saints I saw represented before me, singing the Song of the Blessed in the Land of Light. Oh, how I loved 'Magnificat!' What was it made me think I could see Our Lady step from the glorious mullioned window, clad in sheen of heavenly radiance, and lead our joyous hymn of praise for the salvation of mankind, as the shout of thankful voices went up to heaven?" Only this—the child is father to the man!

Just as the Eastern traveller, crossing the weary, dry, and barren desert, ever and anon about to faint and die for want of water wherewith to slake his thirst, and finds a rill here and a stream there, and so crosses the land of death in safety, yet with much danger; so was it with this poor child. Surrounded by influences that might fairly have worked his utter ruin in a spiritual point of view, the good angel was at his side, and soon would lead him, just when

faith was fading, to a spring of spiritual refreshment that would fortify his soul and keep him right.

We shall see how in after-years of doubt, and sin, and gloom, this early cherished love of Church music preserved his soul from falling utterly into scepticism. A slender thread may draw a cord, and the cord a strong rope, and that rope bring deliverance to the captive; so this love of choral song made the Sunday worship loved, and that kept religion alive in the lad's heart, where else it would have perished.

Thank God, music is now being restored in England to its proper place in the worship of God. The Puritanism of our forefathers that thought everything that was beautiful and refined too Popish to suit their creed, is giving way before Time the Avenger, and the Beautiful, own sister to the True, shall once more help to win men's hearts to heaven.

How absurd to preach to men of the music of the heavenly courts, the harpers harping with their harps, and the unutterable harmony of the Song of Moses and the Lamb they chant around the Throne of Light, when you have just been singing God's praises and your own together in an execrable apology for poetry, set to music that might well do service for the war-dance of a troup of wild Indians!

It cannot be the wisest plan to bring men into a dirty, damp, cobwebbed, whitewashed barn, when you want to make them think of the Golden City, whose walls are jewels and whose gates are pearls—unless by making the contrast as great as possible, you hope to awaken their interest. Religion should be surrounded with all that is rarest and most beautiful on earth, that it may speak more loudly of the Land of Beauty.

Henry had friends in the town connected with most of the religious bodies meeting there. Some Wes-

leyans occasionally took him to their services, and he attended a Bible-class at the Independent chapel. The only thing it appears they succeeded in teaching him was, that the sects vehemently abused and anathematized each other in secret, though they pretended to great unity on certain of their grand field days. He found the Independents made rare fun in private of the Baptists' grand doctrine of Total Immersion, and was horribly shocked when a deacon of the former sect chaffed him on the subject. The Baptists, too, made no secret of everywhere ridiculing infant sprinkling, as they called it, and a great impression was made on his mind by the constant quarrelling and squabbles on the subject between the two parties, in every other respect so at unity. He was old enough and observant enough to see that each held the other in the most supreme contempt on this account alone.

His friends did not seem particularly anxious which of the sects he settled down with; he was told that provided he became a good man, it was very little consequence what form his religious belief assumed. So he was allowed to grow up without any fixed religious principles, or anything that he could in any true sense call a creed. Many of his friends he found went to a particular place of worship, not because they were convinced that the religion taught there was purer than elsewhere, but because the preacher was a greater favourite, or the chapel was nearer, or the pews cheaper! Expediency seemed the rule they followed. More than one of the "causes" in the town had been started, he found, out of a "split" as it was termed, from the older places. "Salem," for instance, arose out of a quarrel at "Zion," because the minister's wife was "stuck up," and would not associate with the

flock, besides being rather an invalid, and requiring to be absent for her health so frequently as to interfere with her husband's duties. "Hephzibah," was started from Ebenezer because Mr. James finding Hyper-Calvinism did not pay so well as a more "Evangelical" form, adopted the latter to the disgust of the older part of his congregation, who found that "We are a garden walled around," was very seldom or never sung; and that Solomon's Song, as a text-mine, was very rarely worked.

He was told, therefore, to look about for himself; for was he not fifteen years old, well up in his Bible, with at least six distinct religions in the town to choose from! What more could a boy want? he must be hard to please if he were not soon suited.

He was warned, however, that in this paradise of religious freedom there was one tree whereon hung forbidden fruit, at which he must not dare to look, much less taste. He might take his fill of any or all of the other religions, save only the Roman Catholic. Oh, dreadful words to a disciple of Salem! They were alone sufficient to conjure up visions of Smithfield, all blazing with holy Protestant bishops, that would not fall down to worship the image the Pope had set up; the Inquisition, with deep dungeons, crowded with innocent and exemplary Baptists and Independents; convents with lime-pits half filled with bleached skeletons of babies whose mothers were their murderers; visions of scowling priests burning Bibles and torturing heretics; all arose at the mention of the words Roman Catholic. As we said, from infancy Henry had been cautioned against the horrors of this terrible religion. He had often passed the Catholic Chapel of the little town, and had once ventured with much fear to peep within. Outside the

rather handsome building was a statue of St. Peter with the keys. This he had always understood was to represent that Peter could let anybody into heaven he liked, or lock them up in the other place if he chose, and that to propitiate him Catholics used to devote a fair portion of their time to the worship of his image; this was dreadful enough, but he was told worse was within; so one morning he summoned courage to enter. As he passed the church about ten o'clock, he almost expected to hear suppressed shrieks, and to see instruments of torture hanging up on the walls; instead of which he heard ravishing music so sweet, so thrilling, that he stood fixed to the spot. He saw pictures of the Blessed Jesus bearing His cross, and going on His weary way to Calvary for man's sin; he saw—and the tears came as he looked—a life-sized representation of Christ hanging bleeding from five gaping wounds on the cross: he turned and saw again a statue with a calm, sweet, loving, tender face and outstretched hand; it was God's blessed mother, the Mary who stood beneath the cross and whom he had been taught, strange to say, to hate and despise; it seemed as though the tender eyes reproached him for having once, when a child, mocked at a little girl he met in the street, who as he was told was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and was dressed always in white. He saw at the end of the church, which was richly decorated throughout, yet more glorious at the part where the altar stood, the priest in costly embroidered robes with the censer in his hands, from which arose a perfume entirely new to him; the priest was speaking, but in a language and tone he could not understand; then a bell rang when all had been silent for some minutes, and the people who were paying rapt attention knelt reverently in

prayer, till all at once there burst from the choir such a strain of sweet music that it almost lifted him from the ground and made him cry for joy. All this was new to him; he had heard of, but had never seen Catholic worship before, and what he did see and hear that day was never afterwards erased from his memory. One thing struck him most forcibly: before the altar in the sanctuary, richly adorned with blue and gold, there hung a silver lamp, whose pale but brilliant light he was told burned night and day before the Host. He knew no more, but he never heard of a Catholic chapel after that, but he thought of the sweet lamp watching there through the dark nights when the people had gone home to rest; watching in the early morning before the town had risen to work, watching in the summer's day when the people were roaming in the fields, watching in the winter's cold when they were round the fire; ever burning, ever watching before the altar throne, while men were being born or were dying, while men were busy or asleep; never growing tired of chapel, or weary of the presence of God, always burning and struggling upwards, while men were falling away from God and His love and service, into the ways of Satan and the paths of sin. These thoughts came to him as he remembered the silver lamp, and it seemed supernatural in its beauty as though angels tended it, and the flame were brought from heaven and was going back thither. He went away, told what he had seen, at home and at school, and received several more lectures on Smithfield and a certain monster, considered half-demon half-man, called the Pope. About this time he heard that a schoolfellow, who was the senior scholar when Henry entered, and had left some months, had become a Catholic, and was being

educated for a priest. He had always been considered the best boy in the school, so kind he would never let the little ones be ill-used by the other boys, so good natured he would always leave his own lessons to help a duller lad; he was tall, with a most tender countenance and handsome manly face; all loved him, he was so good and clever. The school seemed lost without Horace Sylvester, and none missed him more than Henry, for they had been like brothers together of late: and now to think he had gone and cut himself off from all his friends and had become a dreadful Catholic! People spoke of him as of a friend who had suddenly turned out to be a felon, and his family turned the conversation at his name, as though he had disgraced it and theirs. Little could Henry learn of him more, and though for a time his well-remembered features haunted his memory, and made his heart beat faster at the recollection, he soon forgot him as a schoolboy would, and he passed from conversation.

While choosing a creed, the time had arrived for him also to choose a profession. After some delay it was settled that he should become a surgeon, so he left home for the first time in his life, and went to Dr. Flaxman's, of Wentbridge, as apprentice to the healing art.

CHAPTER V.

THE DOCTOR'S FAMILY.

DR. FLAXMAN was selected to teach Henry his profession for two or three reasons—first, he was known to the family; secondly, he was reckoned a very religious

man, being a Wesleyan and a preacher; and, in the third place, he had a good practice, and being considered clever, was likely to assist Henry to become a worthy disciple of Esculapius. So as our hero showed considerable liking for the healing art he was sent, with many prayers for his well-doing and with many wise counsels, to Wentbridge. His parting from home and experience of starting fairly on life's troubled voyage was so like every other boy's experience of the matter that we shall not here describe it. Suffice it to say that he arrived at Dr. Flaxman's, for a month on trial, soon after he had reached his sixteenth birthday, at the latter part of the year 18—.

Wentbridge was eighty miles from Merlington, and the journey was not to be accomplished without sundry changes of carriages at various junctions on the railway; this made the distance seem all the greater to poor Henry. It was dark when he arrived at the old dingy city of colleges where he was to learn to be a doctor, and he felt very depressed when the train set him down at his destination. The doctor had sent his gig for him, and the groom soon recognizing our hero, took his luggage and helped him to mount to his place, and drove off with him. Henry had found his long journey very tedious, and was not sorry when he found his companion inclined to be communicative. He had heard but little of Dr. Flaxman and his family, and was anxious to learn something of his future master and his new home.

"Have you lived with the doctor long?" he ventured to ask.

"About six weeks, captain," was the reply.

"He is a very kind man, I suppose?"

"Well, I'm blessed! whatever made you suppose that?"

"Is he not a Wesleyan and a preacher?"

"Of course he is; but what has that to do with the question you ax'd me?"

"Well, I thought it *should* have."

"Oh, did you! Oh! ain't you precious green, captain?"

"Why, manma said she chose Dr. Flaxman's home for me because she knew all the family were pious, and would on that account be more likely to make me comfortable."

"Ah! ah! ah!" laughed the groom, "oh! oh! oh!" and then with the most comical expression imaginable looked pityingly into Henry's face, as he exclaimed again, "oh! ain't you precious green? oh! ain't your ma' precious green?"

The driver not appearing so communicative on this subject as on others, Henry ventured no farther, but began to ask questions about the business, and what his duties would be, and so forth. The replies seemed perfectly satisfactory; he found there would be work enough with helping to make up the physic and attending to the shop, for the doctor kept what is termed an "open surgery."

Henry was very anxious to succeed; he had done well at school, indeed had carried off most of the prizes, and was still working hard at his books, so that his industry and application seemed likely to stand him in good stead in the profession he had chosen: he liked work thoroughly, and though of a delicate constitution work agreed with him well; he was not therefore alarmed at finding there would be plenty to do. He did certainly wonder a little what the groom's ominous expressions could mean about the domestic comfort he was likely to experience.

However, he silenced his fears by remembering that

his mother had been to see the house, and was perfectly satisfied with all that she knew or could hear of the doctor and his family. By this time the gig drew up at the surgery-door, and Henry stepped down as blithely as possible.

The doctor received him with a smiling welcome, and held out his hand to his new pupil. Henry took it, and did not like the feel of it at all; he could not tell why, but it seemed an unkind hand.

He was then ushered into the drawing-room, where sat Mrs. Flaxman and her two daughters, Tryphena and Tryphosa. "You will remember," said the doctor's lady, "St. Paul says, 'Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa.'"

Henry remembered the passage, but did not feel at all inclined to obey the Apostle, in the present instance at least, for the damsels created a very ill impression on him.

They were respectively about eighteen and twenty years of age, were very pious and demure-looking, and when they smiled, which was evidently seldom, they no sooner detected themselves in the act than they repressed the relaxation of their facial muscles and resumed their sanctimonious aspect. They were short, very short, and extremely thin; their figures were all straight lines and angles, like some of the pictures in Euclid. When they spoke it was in a kind of sneer, and generally to contradict either their mamma, papa, or one another; at least so it appeared to Henry. As the doctor was busy, Mrs. Flaxman and the girls were desired to assist our hero to make himself at home. It was about seven in the evening when he arrived, and, as is the wont with growing boys after a long journey, he began to feel desperately hungry. Miss Flaxman said they had taken tea, and

supper would be ready at nine, in a tone that implied he had better wait till that hour if he wanted anything to eat, and then faintly declared she should be pleased to get him some refreshment in the meantime if he wished. Henry saw at a glance he was not wanted to wish, so he abstained, and declared he would prefer waiting till their usual hour for supper, which, under the circumstances, was quite a sincere assertion. He remembered how differently his mother behaved towards her guests, how she insisted on their making themselves comfortable, and how refreshment for a traveller was always her first care. But there was a general gloom and coldness about this house that contrasted strongly with every thought of home.

Mrs. Flaxman was in appearance about forty-five years old. Like her daughter, whom she strongly resembled, she was bony, of mean stature, and a severely acid cast of countenance. She was dressed in a steel-grey stuff gown, with a very neat collar and pair of white cuffs, all sternly fastened in their places, but without an atom of jewellery. Her hair was dark and scrupulously smooth; her nose was sharply pointed; her mouth small, with thin, bloodless lips; her eyes grey, and piercingly sharp; her voice was pitched in a high key; her manner was quick and nervous. She had a most peculiar way of expressing herself. She was a "Plymouth Sister," and the characteristics of her sect were strongly developed in Mrs. Flaxman. She was, in fact, a religious porcupine, armed at all points with a stiletto, in the way of reproof, for any person who differed from her; and seeing that everybody in Wentbridge did, except the twenty-five elect persons, who worshipped in a gentleman's drawing-room, who was one of the favoured few, she had abundant opportunity of displaying her quills.

If any one said it was "miserable weather," she immediately caught them up with the reply, that God sent the weather, and it did not become His creatures to murmur at it and call it ill names. Did another complain of heat or cold, they were told that God knew best what was good for us, and we ought to be thankful for either extremity. Was it reported the harvest was bad and provisions dear, a caution against grumbling was immediately propounded—not that she was by any means free from the vice herself. But as a ground of difference with her fellows, resignation was her strong point. Did she hear of a neighbour's loss, she instantly remarked that it was a chastisement for a fault she had long noticed with pain, and trusted it might be blessed to him. She never wrote a letter without enclosing a leaflet appropriate to the occasion, and often inscribed on her envelopes "*Postman is your soul saved?*" which question had the unhappy letter carrier presumed to have answered in the affirmative, it would have been instantly demonstrated to him that he was mistaken, and if in the negative, an invitation to the drawing-room meeting would have been given as the only way to attain that desirable end.

Mrs. Flaxman asked Henry where he went "to worship;" he said, generally to the Baptist chapel, but occasionally he went to church, as he was very fond of singing. He was told that this was a practice fraught with great danger, that music was always employed by Satan to seduce souls; that it was the opinion of an eminent Plymouth brother, that the Serpent sang to Eve when he tempted her to take the apple, and that certainly fine singing was a snare of the devil, to lead people to Rome; at the same time observing that the German concertina was the only musical instrument she would permit her daughters to

use, and that only for the very simplest hymn tunes. Henry heard them soon after and lamented, for the sake of the human race, that the devil had not seen fit to play similar music to Eve instead of singing.

The lady next interrogated our hero as to his religious connexions, and asked him if he was converted yet? This made the poor lad blush as he timidly expressed his conviction that he was. He was next asked if he had been baptized? he replied no; and then being asked why, he had to tell how his late minister doubted if he was "converted enough," and had bidden him wait till he could give a better account of himself.

She said she was sorry he had not experienced greater manifestations of grace, and added that both Tryphena and Tryphosa had been baptized by total immersion at the respective ages of fourteen and sixteen, that they were very "gracious girls," and were Plymouth sisters like herself. She asked Henry if he had heard much of the Plymouth Brethren? he replied in the negative, being entirely ignorant of the existence of the sect, but added that he knew many of the "Salem Brethren" and some of the "Hephzibah Brethren;" whereat Tryphena laughed and was instantly rebuked by Tryphosa, who declared the subject too sacred for jesting. At this moment the doctor entered, and seating himself at Henry's side said,—

"Well, my young friend, I hope your entering on your new career in my house, may be blessed to you!"

Henry modestly assented.

"Now, my young brother, you must tell us what the Lord is doing for you," continued his interrogator.

Henry thought that would be a very difficult task, but replied that he hoped he should go to heaven when he came to die.

Tryphena tittered at this ingenuous answer, and was rebuked by her mother for her growing levity.

The doctor here observed that his motto was to "improve the occasion;" poor Henry began to think it wouldn't do it any harm, and it was proposed that they should "go to prayer" (supper just then would have suited our hero better). The girls for once agreeing, reminded their papa that he could improve the occasion at "family worship," but Mrs. Flaxman, who was always ready to go on her knees or out of her temper at the slightest provocation, supported her husband's proposal, and laid aside her work. Henry was profane enough to wish that the lady had been as liberal with her larder as her devotions.

The doctor being inclined to much verbosity and digression in his extempore prayer, Mrs. Flaxman brought him to anchor with a slight cough, which he well understood, when she considered the "occasion" had been sufficiently "improved." Henry had now an opportunity of taking a survey of his new master, and the impression that examination made on him was not very reassuring. The worthy man was middle-aged, but looked younger than he was; slightly taller than his wife, he was not unlike her in countenance, as frequently happens. He was getting bald, though what hair he had left was dark, and a tuft on either side of his face, like incipient horns, gave him rather a Mephistophelian appearance; his eyes were sharp, and his eyebrows seemed washed out; there was no spark of geniality visible in the man, one of those utterly unlovable beings whom even the domestic animals seem to wisely shun.

He was an excessively mean man, not merely careful and economizing, *that* is a virtue everywhere to be praised, but he was mean-souled, narrow-minded, and bigoted. He had risen from the ranks, for he had been as a lad only a shopboy; this was praiseworthy. He was fairly educated, but his knowledge being chiefly self-acquired, he was, as is generally the case in similar circumstances, intolerant of other people's opinions when they crossed his own. So he lacked the tone and polish that ever accompanies the liberally educated man. He was proud of what he had done, and despised those of his fellows who had reached only the lower rungs of the ladder he had climbed. He was religious in his peculiar sense, that is, he made a loud profession of godliness, but was sadly deficient in its practice. He was proud of being religious, and was, in fact, an eminently self-righteous Pharisee. He was, moreover, of a very aggravating and violent temper, which he made only such efforts to check as should prevent his failing becoming notorious.

Although so mean, he sometimes gave to charities, but only when there was a prospect of reaping a good interest in the way of increased business from the transaction; he never omitted the trumpet solo in any of his public performances. He agreed very ill with his wife, whom he had married for her money, as he did not scruple to let her know; they were diametrically opposed to each other in religious matters, as on every other subject, yet they managed to disguise the real state of affairs from the world. Had there been only one religion in existence when this charming couple were united, one or other would have invented a second, if only to have something to quarrel about. Each would have scorned to have been seen inside the other's meeting-house, and it was

difficult to say which succeeded in making their religion most offensive to the observer.

No servant had been known to stay longer than three months with them, so as some reliable help was needed for the shop, the doctor usually took apprentices, and a pretty time they had of it. Until the fish was fairly hooked, and the time of probation was ended, the pupil fared pretty well, but the articles of indenture were no sooner signed, and the premium secured, than all was changed. The poor lad was "treated as one of the family," as had been agreed on, but the practice would have been more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

However, all this was unknown and unsuspected by Henry's friends; the doctor bore a good character without, "whited sepulchre" as he was, and had been recommended to Mrs. Pattison by a Salem deacon as a "God-fearing" man, whose only failings, from a Baptist point of view were, that his creed embraced too much of works and too little of water.

The clock having struck nine, supper was announced by a very lean maid, who had been apparently framed by nature purposely to match the rest of the family. Grace was said by the doctor, who took the opportunity of thanking Providence for the bountiful provision made for the supply of the wants of "us poor fallen creatures," whereat Henry thought something good for supper was coming, and was a little surprised when he was told to make free with the slice of bread and cheese handed to him, while the doctor helped the ladies and himself to the devilled kidneys that had just been brought in. However, hunger lent him appetite, though the cheese was inclined to be "hot." Dr. F. always selected the strongest flavoured cheese he could for the household, reserving Stilton,

to which he was very partial, for himself and wife, explaining that it was necessary for *his* peculiar constitution, though he disapproved of it for ordinary stomachs (Mrs. Flaxman prescribed her own dietary on all occasions).

Supper ended, "family worship" was announced. A chapter from the Bible was read by Mrs. Flaxman; for it must be explained that the doctor occasionally read such portions of Holy Writ as he considered most appropriate to upset his wife's religious opinions, and the lady having rebelled and threatened to absent herself from the "domestic altar," it was agreed that the service should be conducted by each in turns of a week's duration.

The doctor's wife, therefore, had an opportunity of returning all her husband's compliments at prayers, which made the morning and evening meeting a source of considerable amusement to the rest of the family.

The chapter read, a hymn was selected in the lady's week from the "Plymouth Brethren's Selection," and in the doctor's week from "Wesley's Hymns," which were sung to a concertina accompaniment by either Tryphena or Tryphosa. The prayers (on both sides extempore) which followed, became the medium of many sly hits and sharp cuts at the failings and defects of the rest of the domestic congregation, generally expressed in Scripture phraseology. Had the cook been saucy to her mistress during the day, a clause was neatly inserted in the prayer to the effect that "those whose lot and privilege it is to serve in this Christian household, may for the future be made 'obedient to them that are their masters according to the flesh, pleasing them well in all things, not *answering again*, not purloining, but show-

ing all good fidelity,'" which quotation, be it observed, embraced a salutary caution with respect to the store-room.

In a similar manner the lady punished her husband for his want of affection, who at the earliest opportunity replied with an apt quotation on the dutifulness of wives. So that it can readily be imagined family prayer was an important feature in the arrangements of the Flaxman family.

Soon after prayers Henry asked to retire to rest, for he was fatigued, and wanted to be alone with the new thoughts that were crowding in upon him. He bade good night to the family and went to his room.

We shall close this chapter with a short extract from his diary: "So here I am, my first night away from home, and from such a home as I have left. How can I ever like another, how can I love this? These people may be good, but I am sure they are not my sort of people at all. I know I can never love them. I don't like them; I like Dr. Flaxman least of all; but any way, if they will keep me I will stay, for I will get on; I will make my way in the world if God will help me. I will try to repay my dear, brave mother for her goodness to me. She was brave, and I will be brave if only for her sake. She would never like me again if I went back home just because I didn't find everything exactly to my taste. Never mind the family, I shall not have very much to do with them after all. I have my books, and I will bury myself in them all my spare time, and I dare say they will be glad enough to be rid of my society as much as possible, so I will get into my shell like the snail when the outside weather don't suit him. But I am a silly lad, perhaps things will turn out better than I expect; and yet I never had a schoolfellow that

I disliked at first sight that I ever came to love afterwards; and somehow I don't like these people, and I know I never can be fond of Dr. Flaxman. But I do care for the groom; I shall find him *worth* liking, I fancy. I wonder what he meant by his queer way of answering my questions. Ah, well, never mind, it is only for four years, and then London and the hospitals! So cheer up, and think of dear mother and sis. They shall see their Harry's heart is not made of butter!"

And so the brave lad knelt down at his bedside, and asked God to help him to get on and to do right, and to take care of him in the start in life he had made, and to take care of his mother and sister.

Then the tears rushed to his eyes, and soon burst the barriers he had been building up against downheartedness so carefully, as he thought how they would be missing him at home that night.

And then rising, he went to the window and looked out; the autumn sky was full of stars, and the moon sailed on her silver course, as though conscious of the admiration she was exacting from her subjects.

Henry looked through his tears at the heavens, and thought that as the same stars and the same moon watched over Merlington, they were not so far separated after all. Then the railway whistle sounded in the distance, and it consoled him to think the iron road connected him with home, and he could soon be there if he wanted. But best of all he thought the same heavenly Father cared for them; and as he reflected how God knew all about him, and what was best for him to do and suffer, he summoned his heart to order again, shut the casement, and went to bed, to dream of being a great physician, and discovering some wonderful medicine that should cure poor mother's headaches and sister Lucy's cough, besides

helping them to live in a big house again, and do as well as if his lost father were still working for them.

CHAPTER VI.

PURSUING KNOWLEDGE.

THE month soon passed. Henry saw little reason to alter the opinion he had formed of the family on his first arrival. They were cold, hard, mean, pharisaical and selfish. He was warm, impulsive, sensitive, open, honest and generous. There was no sympathy between their natures, but he was too self-reliant and determined to get on to let this trouble him much. He was bound for four years to learn medicine and surgery; his mother and sister came up at the settling of affairs, the premium was paid, and the deed signed that handed him over to the doctor's tender mercies.

While Henry was on probation, he was treated as well by the doctor and his family as they were capable of treating any of their inferiors, and they placed their tempers under more restraint than usual. But when this was ended they felt more at liberty to show themselves in their true colours. It soon became evident that the Flaxman family were too unkind and cold in their natures to make any one about them happy. The greatest amount of work for the least possible remuneration, either in food, money, recreation or domestic comfort, was the principle on which they acted and by which they had succeeded in achieving their position. Sympathy entered not into their vocabulary, and their harshness was made all the worse

by the semblance of religion with which it was arrayed.

Henry saw all this before many months had passed, and it would have required more fortitude than usually enters into a boy's composition, had he felt very keenly the misery of his lot. His determination to be a thorough student and master his profession, however, so took off his thoughts from the present, and directed them to the goal at which he aimed, that he reduced the unpleasantness of his home to the minimum.

A taste for reading and love of study, next to religion, will conduce more to a man's happiness than anything else in the world. Who shall sufficiently sing the praises of good books; who shall estimate the profit of holding communion at will with the master spirits, the genius of the human race? Better burn the midnight oil and bear the wasted cheek and pallid face that are the student's badge, than, sleeping out a merely animal existence, pass from the world without making the acquaintance of the noble minds who are alone its rightful kings, or doing homage at the shrines of departed genius whose possessors, like Prometheus, have soared above and stolen the heavenly fire that has illuminated the dull materialism of the flesh with the glory that becomes immortal spirits.

What if the physique be not developed after the model of a "muscular Christian," the muscles will have become worms' meat, while the spirit is pursuing its studies from the point where it left off when it burst its fleshly bonds, in a world where no lesson learned below shall be forgotten, and no mental gain acquired shall be lost—if only it be consecrated to Him whose are the talents with which His servants trade.

Henry knew that what his mind was gaining from

study he was making his own for ever, and he gloried in the noble thought; and so he could despise the petty annoyances he received from those about him. This discipline was his making—his pleasures came to be sought at mental and spiritual sources.

The lives of the great and the noble amongst men spurred him on to the imitation of brave and glorious deeds. As he came to love the wise he grew to love the good, and to find that to be truly wise is to be first truly good. It was pity that in his studies he was left almost entirely to his own resources.

Dr. Flaxman had only studied just sufficiently to enable him to obtain his legal qualifications. He was no more liberal towards the mental powers than to his other servants. He learned little more than his profession compelled him; and as for loving study for its own sake, it was out of the question with him.

A rich relative of Henry's occasionally sent him a little money wherewith to purchase books, and this he laid out at the second-hand booksellers, of which the University of Wentbridge was full.

His favourite study was botany. It is pleasant to notice his remarks on the way he pursued it:—

"I had to be in the shop at latest by eight a.m., and as I never left it till nine p.m. I was fully occupied with the business during the day; my time for study had necessarily to be abstracted from the hours of rest.

"An inch of candle was at most my allowance for bed, so I resorted to the following expedient for a light. I could not afford to purchase candles, so I was fain to filch the olive oil from the shop, and burn it with a floating wick made out of a wax match and slice of cork. When I went to my room at night I used to carefully screen my midnight light from be-

traying my habits to the household, and then, when all was arranged, I sat down with my books for at least two hours' study. It was in this way I mastered the rudiments of structural botany. By the aid of a pocket microscope I used to dissect and examine the plants I had obtained during my early summer morning rambles. I had managed to possess myself of some of Lindley's best treatises, and soon the study grew to be an amusement, and from an amusement to a passion. It was no uncommon thing for me to dream I had discovered some long-sought-for specimen of stinging-nettle or chickweed; and great was my disappointment at awaking and finding it was a dream.

"And then, the early morning rambles at sun-rise, in the spring and summer, through the lovely Wentbridge lanes and tangled woods, to search for new plants whereon to exercise my newly-acquired knowledge. I had a companion in my rambles; it was Jem, the groom—who ever heard of a botanical groom? He used to love to accompany me. Poor Jem! he was my only friend at the doctor's. He was ignorant, and sadly poor; but he knew a wonderful deal about horses, and was very useful to the doctor, and was cheap to boot. He was very good-natured, and we soon got to be great friends, and nothing pleased him better than to start out with me to look for plants. He was a thinking fellow, but a confirmed infidel; at least, he disliked the Bible and ridiculed it, not so much for what it was in itself, as for what people made out of it. He believed there was a God, but said he was sure such people as the Flaxmans, and others whom he knew, were utterly ignorant of Him. It was wonderful how easily he upset my arguments for religion. It was plain he had thought much more on the subject than I had. One thing he declared was his great dif-

ficulty. 'If religion was from God, and that God was one God, the religion would be one. There could be only one religion that was the right one; yet the sects all professed to be right, and each cursed the other.' I suggested that all the forms of the Christian religion united to one end—the worship of God and the good of mankind—and that the true religion would, I suppose, really be the combination of the good qualities of each.

"This theory only seemed to draw down Jem's scorn. He said, if they were all wrong in some points, how were we to know in which they were right? and it was absurd to suppose a Divine religion would leave men in the dark about its doctrines.

"This bothered me immensely. I begged him not to try and shake my faith, for I could not answer him. So I did my best to teach him botany, and he proved a very apt scholar. He had an amazing instinct for rummaging out rare specimens from odd sorts of places. He was, indeed, a plant-hunter, taking as much delight in the excitement of specimen-seeking as in any other kind of hunting imaginable. I flatter myself he remained with the family longer than he would have done, because he grew attached to me and my pursuits."

It seems strange to fancy a man getting excited in the search for what the profane would designate weeds; but once get a taste for botany, and the charm of roaming after specimens is perfectly irresistible. It is, doubtless, designed by Providence to bring plants from their hiding-places, and give mankind the advantage of their virtues.

When obtained, these flowers would be named by assigning them, in accordance with their characteristics, to their proper order and class, and, having been

pressed and dried, would be preserved in the herbarium Henry took delight in forming.

Our young philosopher applied himself to the study of chemistry; and as the doctor would on no account permit dangerous experiments to be tried in the surgery, these had to be done by stealth in the bedroom when the house was quiet at night.

Here Henry had retorts, crucibles, alembics, and blowpipes, and many a brilliant experiment did he bring to successful issue in this manner. He soon made considerable progress in this branch of study, so that he became quite an expert ere the doctor knew that he had gone beyond the rudiments; for so long as the drudgery of the profession was attended to, the scientific part of his pupil's education was little cared for by him.

Henry entered on his work in the spring of 18—, and the time soon sped away, engrossed as he was in what was to him life itself,—the pursuit of knowledge.

All the pocket-money he could get hold of went in books: he was an omnivorous reader, nothing came amiss to him; he made mental nutriment out of all he read, and it was no wonder, therefore, that his mind began rapidly to expand, and his intellectual muscles to develope apace.

He read many books on religion, amongst others, Paley's "Evidences of Christianity," which made him think a good deal on the subject, for he was, amidst so much diversity of religious opinion as he saw around him, beginning to entertain some of the sceptical notions of the groom.

He heard Mrs. Flaxman ridiculing her husband's creed to his face, and the doctor retorting with contempt on the fantastical notions of the Plymouth sect. He could see that the whole family were actuated by the

bitterest sentiments towards all their opponents, and that their scorn was the greater for those who in doctrine were nearest to them. For instance, the ladies who were of the Plymouth persuasion, while they simply pitied Catholics and Anglicans, abhorred the Dissenters, to whom they bore so close a likeness, and from whom they had mostly arisen.

Small as their numbers were, they had recently had a serious division amongst themselves on some abstract point of scholastic theology, and the rupture was no sooner made than they began to anathematize each other as vigorously as they did the rest of Christendom.

Henry heard much of these squabbles, for Tryphena and her mother were "original" Plymouthians; but Tryphosa, who had become what she termed "spiritually attracted" towards Brother Childs, who had annexed himself to the other side, joined his party, much against her mother's inclination.

If the truth must be told, it pleased Tryphosa not a little to have a grand subject of difference with her mother and sister, and she made herself master of all the arguments her side could produce against their former colleagues; at the same time abstaining from attending the drawing-room meeting, and frequenting the opposition services of the new branch of Christianity, which had taken up its spiritual abode in an upper room belonging to one of the secessionists, of whom there were seven, including Tryphosa and her "spiritual affinity," Mr. Childs.

Then there was Doctor Flaxman, who was a staunch supporter of the old Wesleyan system, and he had no dealings, except in maledictions, with the various offshoots of their society. Some of his friends had become members of the "Methodist New Connexion," and others had joined the "United Methodist Free

Church," while others had become "Primitives." These all had their weekly and monthly organs, wherein they vehemently basted each other, and took all pains to expose the failings of their former co-religionists. So jealous were they of each other's success, that they did not scruple to accuse one another of the most dishonourable motives in their religious transactions; so that on one occasion, the Wentbridge folk had the edifying spectacle presented them of some flaming posters warning them not to contribute to the funds of the Missionary Society of one of the religious parties at war with the rest, a hint being thrown out that the income of the society in question was not entirely absorbed in providing toilet requisites for the Woorabang Indians, but that a large margin was appropriated to the carnal necessities of the Managing Committee in London.

Henry had found out the Baptist Chapel soon after his settlement, and regularly attended its services, for he felt no inclination to follow either of the religions represented in the doctor's family,—indeed, the unseemly conduct of all its members went far to make him despise all creeds. It was plain that real Christianity was sadly misrepresented there. Cant was so thoroughly interlarded with all they said and did, that they became quite unconscious of the profanity of their conduct, or the ludicrousness of their behaviour.

On one occasion the doctor was in a towering passion with his wife at table. Each taunted the other almost beyond endurance, till at last, smarting under the asperity of the lady's tongue, the surgeon rose, trembling with passion, and, shaking his fist violently in her face, declared, "If it were not for restraining grace, he would knock her down."

The lady said that his "restraining grace was very kind, but had not interposed any too soon."

One evening, the hour for family prayer having arrived, found Tryphena and Tryphosa busy at their needle, and the table covered with various articles of feminine apparel that they were desirous of finishing, if possible, that night. The doctor came in, looked irritable, and got the big Bible and the Hymn-book down, bidding the girls put their work away; they urged a little delay, but the impatient temper of their father was fast rising, so he violently rang the bell, and shrieking for Mary, Susan, and James at the top of his voice, seized the poker and made a clearance of the table with it, sweeping work-boxes, needle-work and all that the affrighted ladies could not snatch away, on to the floor, when, having made space for the big Bible and Hymn-book, he proceeded to officiate at the "family altar" as he always called it, amidst the contempt of his audience. He read the chapter and sang the hymn, and had it all to himself that night, for the ladies would not assist him, and the servants were too busy suppressing their merriment to do so. By the time he came to the prayer he had cooled down, and felt ashamed of himself; so he commenced by lamenting the frailty of our nature, and laid great stress on the vexatious cares of life, and the constant upsets and troubles of this waste, howling wilderness, finishing up by a sore rating for his Satanic Majesty, who he declared

> —— "Trembles when he sees,
> The meanest saint upon his knees;"

and consequently tries to put saints out of temper, more especially at family prayer time. Which apology having in some sort soothed his conscience, he be-

sought Heaven to awaken to a sense of their depravity "the members of this Christian household, who not unfrequently act with disobedience to parental authority and thereby arouse that parental displeasure, which in our frail constitution, ever ready to betray us, sometimes assumes an unsanctified aspect." Having thus divided his sins impartially between the devil and his daughters, the old gentleman in no way abashed, rose from his knees, wiped the dust off them carefully, and sat down to supper.

These and many similar occurrences operated with very ill effect on Henry's mind, but the wise counsels, and above all, the good example of his mother, and his love for his sister, who would have adorned any profession she might have made, preserved him from thinking all he had to do with were hypocrites.

So time wore on, and the term of his apprenticeship was drawing to a close. He had made good use of his time, and looked forward anxiously to the day when he should enter as student at one of the great hospitals where he should complete his education.

He had only another year to remain with the Wentbridge surgeon, and that year he determined to work harder than ever. He could look back at the three years already passed in hard and eager pursuit of knowledge, and the retrospect was satisfactory. He saw how much he had already gained, and it gave him encouragement for the future. But, alas! he did not thank God, who had given him the ability to succeed; in his intellectual pride he trusted in himself, and forgot Him to whom he owed all. And God saw fit to show him his error, and give him time to remember his Creator in those days of his youth.

It was the autumn of 18—, the fever had been

raging at Wentbridge, and Henry had worked day and night making the medicines for the sick; he took the fever, and when the premonitory symptoms had manifested themselves sufficiently, the doctor, alarmed at the ugly visitor which had invaded his house, hurriedly packed poor Henry off home for his mother to nurse.

It was night when the sick lad started for Merlington, which he reached when the little town was all gone to bed. Arrived at home in the first stage of the delirium that was advancing upon him, his horrified mother and sister, with many expressions of welcome mingled with reproaches at his master's inhumanity, got him to bed and called in medical advice. And so it was that day by day the lad grew worse and worse, and the physician's countenance more hopeless as he watched him, and when he could hide it no longer, he told the sorrowing, heart-broken mother that her darling, her other life, her boy must die. At first Henry fretted and chafed under the hand of God, but as his malady increased he gradually grew more patient and calm, and his friends noted the change and thought it boded ill for his recovery; they said he was calming down for death. It was a remarkable change; the irritable restlessness was gone, and a thoughtful, spiritual melancholy had taken its place. And no one could tell how or why. The physician was as much puzzled about it as any body, such a symptom entered into no diagnosis of Scarlet Fever he had ever read or heard of, and yet there it was; the patient, neither worse nor better, had undergone a marvellous alteration.

How that mother and sister loved that poor young man! Through the long, weary nights they never left him except to snatch by turns a hurried hour of re-

pose. How they watched every movement of the wasted hands, and noted every motion of the parched lips or vacantly rolling eyes. He was reduced to a shadow of his former self, and seemed as though he no longer belonged to the busy world of men, but had passed over to the possession of that of spectres.

He had ceased to notice them, he was unconscious of their presence, and appeared to be already dead to everything that surrounded him; they had made up their minds they must lose him, and were preparing themselves for the terrible calamity which they felt nothing could avert. Oh! sad and weary nights of anxious vigil and heart-wrung prayers. It was hard for the widow to see her cherished hope, just in his pride of learning and brave conquering of untoward circumstances, struck down and dragged away to the grave, where that other love was buried, and say, "Thy will be done." It was hard for that sister, with heart all bound up in the brother who was the pride of her every thought, to say farewell to him and joy together, and practice resignation while her heart was breaking.

They prayed, "Oh, God! spare our brave, our noble Henry; give him back to us, though Thou shouldst take all else beside!" And still no change. Life and death fighting for the mastery, how they struggle, these enemies of six thousand years' standing! Remorseless, cruel, insatiate Death, ever doing battle with energy unflagging against brave, bounding, joyous, generous Life; they strive together, and the result of the battle is still uncertain, even to Henry's practised physician. This calm demeanour has increased his hope of life, spared the waste of strength a little, and helped to arrest awhile the hastening sands of his fast-waning glass.

At last, and very slowly, so slowly that the unskilful

doubt, he begins to mend. The wandering spirit, too soon about to hurry from its home, retraces its steps, and moodily returns to its wonted avocations. The powers of life arouse their paralyzed energies, and the sick youth is gradually being restored to health, and to his thankful mother and sister.

He came back to them from the gates of death. He had gone as far as mortal might go without passing within; he had lain at the black portals, and returned to the busy world of life.

He had been at the gates of death, and learned the lesson of life there! He returns as he went not; and having learned the lesson of life from the lips of the grim monarch, was dismissed to put in practice the things whereof Death's Lord had commanded him to tell; returns to men, another man than he went—to life, to live a new one.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LESSON AT THE GATES OF DEATH.

THE valley of the shadow of death is a school into which some of the world's greatest men have been taken to learn the mission allotted them amongst their fellows. It was here that Ignatius of Loyola had the whole course and tenour of his existence changed. Led into the gloomy valley a gay, thoughtless, worldly man, he returned humbled, earnest, sanctified, and burning with that heavenly flame that was to set the hearts of millions of human beings on fire with the love of God.

Great sicknesses make great changes in men's

hearts, because by them God brings us face to face with the realities of life, stops the whirl and rush of business, giving us time to think and impelling us to that meditation to which we are so disinclined; and, above all, terrifying the thoughtless soul by the nearer looming of the awful world beyond, and the whisperings that come through the darkness that enshrouds the portals of the grave.

Here have we seen the proud and daring jester at holy things, trembling at the thought of standing before the King whose laws he had gone on transgressing, without a thought that he must ever be called to account for his actions.

Here, too, the trifler and the vain have learned to estimate at their proper value the four last things—Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell.

Here the weak and irresolute, having seen the vanity of mortal things, have taken resolves in God's strength to aim at heavenly, and spend their remaining days, if haply their time be not all gone, in pursuing with set purpose the reward of them that do well.

God had work, real brave work for Henry Pattison to do, and as yet he had few if any of the needful qualities for his task. The change of purpose, the new direction of aim, was to be made on this sick bed; though his work, his mission, was not to be given him till years of thought, and doubt, sorrow, and groping in the dark, had served to strengthen him for what was in store.

At the earlier stage of Henry's illness he fretted to think of the hours wasted from study, the uselessness of lying idle while so much was to be done, till impatient thoughts found an utterance in repining and irritable words against the Divine Providence thus afflicting him.

The metal was in the furnace, and the heat as yet applied sufficed not to melt it; and so the refiner, kindling a stronger flame, subdued its obstinacy by severer treatment. Thus it came to flow into the new mould awaiting it, and shape itself to the purpose the Master had in view.

Six weary nights had ushered in six days of restless agony, and something began to tell Henry he might soon have to bid the world farewell; and when he had come to look this stern probability in the face, he saw he was not fit to die: he had lived for self; and though he had professed to be a follower of Him, the device of whose standard was the Cross, he saw clearly it was not as one of His soldiers, but rather as one of the mixed multitude and camp-followers, who lag behind the real army.

What had he done for God? How many minutes out of the years his Creator had given him had been spent in His service? What evil propensity had he conquered? what vicious inclination had he suppressed? He had not been openly bad; did not that proceed from fear of punishment, and from no heaven-sent motive?

For the first time in his life he examined his conscience in the lurid light of God's threatened vengeance: the terrors of hell took hold of him, and the justice of God made him quake for fear. Hitherto he had heeded little the pious exhortations of his mother, and the good books his sister had at times, and when he could bear it, read to him. But now he asked to hear once more the story of Calvary, and tried to realize for himself who it was dying there, and for whom the sacrifice was offered.

Evening came again; the night-light was lit, and all was silent in the sick-room. They thought the

patient slept, for he uttered no sound, and scarcely a moan escaped the fevered lips. But he was not asleep: the mind had repelled the advances of sleep, and become superior to the influence of bodily weakness. He was down below the surface of the stream of time, face to face with eternal realities. The anticipation of the particular judgment had engrossed his soul, and thoughts so awful, that they were too deep for words, and too solemn to impart, made him forget his pain, and kept him as one entranced.

It seemed as though (for he afterwards related the circumstance) all his former life were displayed as in a glass before him. There was his selfishness and gross ingratitude to his Creator depicted in a form too truthful and real to be mistaken. Appalled at the picture, he looked about for escape from the clutches of the fiends who on every side stretched out lank and clawed hands to drag him away, their lawful prize. And, terror stricken, he cried for mercy, and remembered that he had almost forgotten to pray, and the fiends laughed derisively at the words of prayer pressed out by terror from the wretched soul they demanded as their own. And as he prayed, it seemed as though the awful forms receded, and in the place of the gloomy gates—the boundary of life and entrance to the ultimate—there seemed to appear a mountain, whereon an awful tragedy was transpiring; it was the Calvary of the story of the Passion his sister had just been reading. That figure stretched on the life-giving wood, was that of the Son of the Highest, and the flowing blood was the Blood of God. And as the overpowering sight fixed his gaze, the eyes of the dying One turned with pity to the trembling spectator, and pierced him through. More clearly in the light of those meek and loving eyes he read his

sin, and yet they reproached him not; there was a strange attraction in their glance, and his very soul wept tears of contrition. The wounded hands and feet and side seemed to unite with the tender, loving eyes of the dying Saviour, and say, with words that went like arrows to his heart,—

"I suffer all this for thee! What hast thou ever done for Me?"

And then it seemed as though, in some mysterious way, he had crucified his Lord with his own hands, and the work he saw before him was *his*, none else were near, that *one* victim and that *one* sinner were all his absorbed soul could embrace; and the greatness of the contemplation filled up the field of his mental vision. He was alone with his God, and that God was dying in agony and for him. This was all he knew.

And as he gazed, another life began within him; and the dying Saviour gave out His life to the dying soul of the sin-stricken spectator. Love was born within him—love for Jesus—and he hated the sin that had slain his Lord, and his soul melted within him, and he felt the germs of a new existence, and a life with a new object had taken root in him before the Cross of Christ. And then he prayed, not in fear, but with love and deep contrition mingled; and the eyes of the Crucified, speaking of mercy and pardon, told him to go and sin no more.

So it was that, as he mused on what his imagination had so vividly placed before him, he seemed to hear angel voices singing in his room. Held captive by the song, his tears flowed for joy at the comfort that had filled his soul; and he wondered at the sweetness of the music, so unlike earthly sounds, yet reminding him of something he had heard before.

Trying in vain to remember where he had heard the melody, his aching eyes fell on the flickering light, upon the mantelpiece, and in a moment there flashed across his mind the scene that had years ago made so deep an impression upon him. Again he seemed to see the Catholic Chapel, and the silver lamp keeping wakeful guard before the jewelled altar. Though he had forgotten it till this moment, or remembered only to dismiss the scene, all was now as vivid as when he stood there. The image of the Mother of God and her welcoming arms, the strains of music and the silver lamp, were once more before him. He wept in his weakness to think how strong and well he was that day, and how changed now; and he wondered if the silver lamp still burned on; he knew it did, and he was filled with shame to think how he had forgotten God the while, and how the very lamp could accuse him of his sin. Then it seemed as though the lamp itself had come into his room, and was there! there! accusing him of having lived for self, while it lived on for God; and then he fell asleep, worn out with mental anxiety and fatigue of thought.

He awoke with the dawn, but not to murmur; and they missed his fretfulness, and sorrowed at its absence, for, as one said, they thought he was the less himself. Ah! so he was, and would never be again. Self received its death-blow that night before the vision of the Cross, and now his motto was, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me."

He was too deeply impressed to relate what he had felt; he mused over it, for the interest of the recollection grew more intense the more he thought of it; and this absorption accounted for his altered demeanour and calm resignation.

He made them read him the story of the Life of

Jesus from the Gospels, not that he had been unfamiliar with it, but it seemed to him he had failed to apprehend what it was the Blessed One came to teach men to do. They read him that New Law, the Sermon on the Mount, those wondrous words of mystery "hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes;" and as they read he saw he had hitherto known nothing of what the Gospel really was, and he prayed he might live to *learn*. Well he knew that none of his teachers even pretended to take that exalted mark as their aim. Well he saw that though loud in protestation of their love of God, they left this rule of life utterly out of their consideration, as too high for them to be guided by. He was not aware that any body of his fellow men tried to make it their rule. He had heard Dr. Flaxman say that he was seeking what the Wesleyans called "perfection," but he conceived it could be nothing but perfection of impudence in *his* case, and heeded it accordingly. And as he lay and thought of this glorious rule, so awful in its majesty and altitude, he wished for some man to tell him what it meant, and how to attain it. But he had none who could enter into his thoughts. Mr. James, the pastor of Ebenezer, had been sent for some days since to come and talk to him, but he had objected "on account of the contagious nature of the malady, and the fear lest Mrs. James and the children might take the infection;"[1] and so he might have died with none but his mother and sister to speak one word of counsel or comfort to his soul.

He did not speak to them much of the deep thoughts that filled his mind. There is a something that ever keeps us from communicating to those with whom we are most in contact the secrets of our inner

[1] This has actually occurred within the writer's knowledge.

life. Probably none know really less about us, our intense delights, our hopes or plans, our aims or spiritual commerce, so to speak, than those with whom we dwell. Our surface thoughts and ideas they are familiar with, but not to them do we usually open that secret tabernacle we fear to have profaned by too much familiarity. This is reserved for that kindred soul—it may be half our life is spent before we meet —who can understand us without words, read our thoughts before they are expressed, and by the affinity and sympathy of their natures with our own, know us even better than we know ourselves. Not the mother who bore us, nor the father who watched our opening years; not the brother nor the sister, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh; not always the wife of our bosom, nor the husband of our youthful days possesses the key of the secret chamber of our soul; for there is a friendship of spirit, and a mighty attraction subsisting between souls *en rapport* with each other, that in its independence of circumstance and spontaneity of action can in no sense be the mere creature of relationship or expediency.

So Henry kept the lesson he had learned to himself, and pondered all these things in his heart. And as the days went by, the tedious days of convalescence, almost harder to bear than the illness itself, he made up his mind that henceforth the things beneath the sun should no longer have all his care. He would live so that he might stand without horror and despair before the Crucified when the last had come. Moreover, he would live aiming to make the world better for his living, so that his heart might not utterly sink when the question, "What hast thou ever done for ME?" was asked again.

But how to do this, that gospel life was what he

wanted to be taught, and there was none to teach him. "Alas!" he sighed, "that no longer the preachers of redemption hold up this divine standard. Alas! that we have here but a rule worn out, behind the age. They say it is too hard to follow; even my poor mother, good Christian as she is, declares it unsuited to our nineteenth century natures. Yet is it there to mock us? Will not God give grace to aid us to obey it?" Then he wondered if anybody had ever tried to act it out. He supposed the Apostles did, and the early Christians as far as the time whose history the Acts of the Apostles relate.

He had heard of good people, had read their lives, but they fell far short of the portrait of a Christian as drawn by the Saviour himself. These biographies were full of letters that told of "*sweet experiences*," "*delightful frames of mind*," and "*gracious manifestations*;" but beyond preaching good sermons or hearing them "*profitably*," and then dying with a mouth full of orthodox and cut and dried Scripture passages, Henry had candidly to acknowledge he saw no signs of saintship, that is, if our Lord's directions were intended to be followed.

There were people, it is true, who professed to be living just as the early Christians did. Mrs. Flaxman and her daughter were of the number. They eschewed all fine dress, jewellery, pleasures that in any sense could be termed "worldly;" but then, the very axioms of their religion were at variance with the view of the Gospel he soon began to take. For he saw that good works, ay, perfection of life, were inculcated, and their grand doctrine of "Faith, the only justification," was utterly nowhere in the Bible. But these Christians whom he knew, not feeling called upon to make any sacrifice, or put themselves to any in-

convenience, save to keep up a great outward distinction from their fellows, talked unlimited gospel, and let the matter end there.

Now Henry thought if he could come across a Christian framed after this heavenly model, he would be utterly unlike any professor of religion with whom as yet he had become acquainted.

Where should he find him? Had it come to this—that Diogenes-like, he must wander about with his newly-found lantern to find the honest man, the Gospel Christian?

Alas! was Christianity then such an abortion that its representatives must be looked for, hidden in some obscure sect, with whose principles he had yet to become acquainted?

It was not surprising that in the midst of these thoughts he should remember that all sects had broken off from the one grand old religion of our fathers; he knew very little of the claims or teaching of this Church, but he knew enough to remember also, that it claimed to be the only true religion, and the exponent of the Saviour's doctrine.

But then he thought, "We all know these claims to be absurd as they are audacious, and if the people of that profession are only one-tenth as bad as I have always understood them to be, the assumption is only equalled by its baseness." So he summarily dismissed the further consideration of Catholicism, and made up his mind to try and be good, acting up as well as he could to his interpretation of Christ's words, under the fostering care of the Baptist faith. Nay, he even entertained the idea of himself one day trying to serve God by extending the Saviour's teaching in the midst of a world, whose maxims were so opposed to the doctrine and spirit of the Sermon on the Mount.

CHAPTER VIII.

SICK VISITORS.

As soon as the infection was considered to be fairly out of the house, the Rev. Mr. James suddenly remembered that it was just possible Henry might be susceptible to the claims of religion, and not improbably might require its consolations. Having saturated his handkerchief with toilet vinegar, he set out for Mrs. Pattison's. Mr. James was great at his handkerchief, which was always exquisitely fine and white; it came in by way of flourish at the close of a telling passage in his sermon, with considerable effect; besides which he considered it graceful to wipe his lips, daintily holding it by both hands, during the brief pause he made when he had enunciated a sentiment more than usually poetical; and on occasion it did excellent service in wiping away the tear that was supposed to accompany the emotional tones in which he not unfrequently delivered affecting anecdotes of happy individuals who had been converted under his preaching, and soared to heaven shortly after, having assured their pastor that they were not "trusting to their works to save them," which, as a rule (we may take the liberty of adding), were not calculated to assist them much.

So Mr. James, having perfumed his handkerchief and armed himself with quite a formidable lump of camphor, proceeded to assure his lady that the calls of duty and his pastoral office demanded his attendance at the sick-chamber of one of his hearers who had recently been suffering from fever; adding parenthetically and with a touching smile, that if he fell a

martyr to the holy work of the ministry, he should reap the martyr's crown (a thing he by no means aimed at). So he sallied forth, having selected from a drawer full of tracts two or three which he thought might be useful to the young man under the circumstances, entitled "Kissing the Rod, or the Uses of Affliction," "Jane Brown, the pious Washerwoman of Finchley Common," "Muggins the Milkman, or the Blessings of the Pump." Mr. James was also great at tracts. He kept a large stock always on hand. Had you knocked at his street-door and been admitted, you might have seen a neatly got-up tin case against the wall, filled with this retail divinity, with the invitation, "Take one," in gilt letters on the top. Some of the tradespeople, who had to call very often for their "little bills," used to wish they could be as welcome to their money as to the "little messengers of truth" so liberally offered. Mr. James having been ushered into Henry's room, where our hero was sitting reading, declared himself "delighted to see one so lately at the grave's mouth, snatched as a brand from the burning—as a Brand from the Burning—brother! Ah, my brother, when you consider how wicked you have been, and we may *all* of us—that is to say, some of us—that is to say, those who, like yourself, have never given their hearts to God—that is to say, who have never joined the cause, acknowledge our unworthiness, when we—I would say you, come to reflect on the multitudinous mercies that, like scintillations of heavenly love, coruscate with radiant effulgence round your path" (this last sentence was one of Mr. James' latest tit-bits, and necessitated the display of the handkerchief); "round your path, as I was remarking," added Mr. James, getting foggy, "when you reflect, I say, that you have been very ill, and

are getting a deal better" (this to get out of the mess), "I do indeed, my dear brother, congratulate you on your recovery; for when I heard of your danger, I had almost feared you would have gone from us" (here the handkerchief was passed over the left eye), "and that the place that knoweth you now, would have known you no more for ever" (this time it was the right eye's turn), "and then, my brother, where would you have been?"

Here the rev. gentleman paused, for the servant entered with the decanter and glasses. Mrs. Pattison joined them, and it required little trouble on her part to prevail on him to take some port.

"It is sad to consider, madam," continued he, addressing himself to the lady, "the lamentable condition of the unhappy persons, who, unable alike clearly to define the time and place of their conversion and see the necessity of Baptism by total immersion, and then, in the sweet seclusion of our hallowed preparation for our pulpit duties, come to hear that some of these poor fellow-men, according to the flesh, are in danger of death—and reflecting that prudence, which, as Butler wisely remarks, is a lower form of virtue, forbids us risking our life, dear as it is to so many of our flock, so that we are prevented from being where our inclinations would otherwise have led us—(thank you, madam—your wine is, I must compliment your judgment, excellent—well, if it will not greatly inconvenience you, a little fowl and ham—for—no, I have not dined!) But the consolations of the Gospel, which you have been richly blessed in hearing faithfully preached so many years, I trust, I do sincerely trust, have abounded to your edification, and sanctified your affliction to you."

Henry was so disgusted with the feeble cant of this hypocrite, who would never have come near him while there was the slightest risk to be run, said very little, except that he had lately commenced the study of the Gospel narrative from a new point of view, (Mr. James started, and took another glass.) He began to think it not altogether inconsistent with the Protestant view of it, to say that faith would be of little value unless accompanied by those works on which our Blessed Saviour laid so much stress.

Mr. James put down his knife and fork, wiped his mouth, this time with the table-napkin, and having asked Mrs. Pattison where she got her poultry, and wondering if the poulterer would give him credit, said in solemn tones,—

"Did I not always say, my dear madam, your son had not a clear Gospel view? Did I not always say he seemed a little 'legal'? Alas! madam, alas! my dear young friend what you say is rank Popery. Alas! Martin Luther, saintly Martin Luther, what would you say if you heard such doctrines put forth in the sacred name of Protestantism? Oh, my brother! my brother! I fear you have imbibed some of Dr. Flaxman's Arminian principles, and have learnt to trust in good works from him. (Thank you, madam, a very little more chicken—only the leg, please, only the leg—yes, just a little ham—excellent ham, I must say!) I never approved of his going to an Arminian household, though I thought Mrs. Flaxman's Free Grace principles, though she is unfortunately touched with the Plymouth heresy, might have counteracted the husband's good works."

Here Henry interposed, and assured his pastor that none of the family had any good works worth

speaking of, and that he felt sure what they had would never do them any harm.

Mr. James said he was rejoiced to hear that they were not resting on a Popish foundation, and trusted Henry might find the perusal of "Muggins the Milkman" useful to him, as showing clearly that the holy Muggins went to heaven without in any way trying to "work" his way there.

Mrs. Pattison innocently asked if "Muggins the Milkman" was the sequel to the "Dairyman's Daughter," and was told that the aforesaid Muggins had married the young lady in question.

"The occasion" having been "improved," Mr. James took his leave, after duly warning Henry of his error, and went about his other pastoral work, leaving our hero little shaken in his new ideas.

They say it never rains but it pours, and spiritual consolation was abundantly offered to the little family this day at least; for, just as tea was ready, the servant announced Mrs. Waller, who had called to see Henry and his mother.

Mrs. Waller was shown in, and joined the tea-table, much to their discomfort.

Mrs. Waller was a very singular lady. She had been formerly connected with Ebenezer, but had recently imbibed what she termed "Revival" principles, which led her to occasionally preach a little on her own account. She was an old maid, and was considered very pious, as indeed she was, but withal very eccentric. She occupied a little house in a retired part of the town, and had painted, in red letters of a bold character, the words "As for me and my house" (herself and maid, aged twelve), "we will serve the Lord," on the fanlight over the front door. In the front parlour window the text, "Ye cannot serve

God and Mammon," appeared. When she had occasion to pay away a bank-note, the recipient found the back of it inscribed with the words, "Owe no man anything," with a variety of other texts considered important to commercial persons. Mrs. Waller was very rapid in her way of speaking, and aimed at reviving all who would submit themselves to her influence. On this occasion she was extremely calm and mild, perhaps on account of Henry's weakness. When sufficiently refreshed with tea, however, she took the opportunity of addressing herself to the young man on his illness.

"Ah, Mr. Henry, having revived, like the parched grass after the rain, and recovered your strength like the eagles and young lions which have their meat in due season, escaping the fiery trial which the elect is called upon to endure for their perfecting and rousing up from their dead state, to see, and believe, and know, and taste, and handle, and feel the blessings which are being held in store for the children of the promises, which, in your case, is fulfilled, because you are as a monument of grace, which I always said you was a fine young man and the image of your mother and the consolation of her heart, which badly enough needs it too, poor thing, as I was remarking to Mrs. Deacon Smith, which says she has indeed a 'eavy trial to bear, and her a lone widow with those two poor children, which you'll excuse me a calling you a child, Master Henry, meaning figurative, like, as the Scripture says, the children of Israel, which, as I was remarking to Brother Waghorn two days ago, is a very impressive history, and is a good subject for a revival sermon, considered as the children of Reformation truth, a making of their way out of the land of Egyptian Popery darkness, through the Red Sea of

the Smithfield fires and the desert of Bloody Mary's reign, with the other Popishness, and priestishness, and candlestickishness, and altarishness as has beset this land of gospel liberty, where everybody may have his own vine and fig-tree and him be unmolested, which country, as Daniel tells us, is the small stone as is to break the rest of the nations into mash, and, as we see, is a sending out to the Rooshians, and Proosians, and Carthoosians, and Dominicans, and Indians, and all the other besotted and benighted dwellers in furrin lands as is in want of the truth, as I told Mrs. Wilson, when she was having tea with me last Wednesday was a week, which I always has just a very little green in it, considering as it helps to soothe and calm my nerves; but no more cheating people ever lived, so they say, than the Chinese, which, considering the Bibles and tracts as we have sent, ought to make them leave off painting the old black leaves green, which I had a bill left at my house the other day, which at first I thought it was a man as was delivering tracts, and I runs to the door to ask for one, and they say as Horniman's tea is not painted, but always good alike, which is a beautiful type of Brother Swafham's sweet preaching, which always comes with such unction; which, talk of that, I have dressed my bedstead with the 'blue' as the chemists sell, against the hot weather, because we are so overrun, and it is hard to drive the Philistines out of the land, even though it is Canaan, a beautiful type of my bedstead, as I was teaching my little maid who was helping me apply the stuff the other day."

This, without a single stop, was delivered in a breath, which important item having failed the lady, she paused to refresh herself, till her eye again meeting Mrs. Pattison, she added,—

"And indeed, Sister Pattison, for though you are not Revival, but Ebenezer, and it's all the same ultimate, as the various roads all a leading to the same place, which it must be a vast satisfaction to you, as having trained up your children in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it, like dear Mrs. Smith, who never whips her dear children without having them first on their knees by her side to ask a blessing on what they are about to receive, and when she has birched them well, considering as birches break no bones, and so far is like hard words, she kneels down and asks a blessing on what they have received, and so they acts up to that beautiful track, which perhaps Mr. James has give you one, as he did likewise me, as it is called 'Kissing the Rod, or the Blessing of Affliction.'"

And thus the good creature rambled on; love of talking alone would have made her a female missionary, and if she had not lived in a country where Bible-women, tract distributors, and revival preachers abound, it is hard to say how her vitality would have been maintained. As it was, the missionary visits were by no means welcome to the hostess; for religion of the demonstrative kind found little favour in her eyes. Being sharp enough to perceive this, she soon took her leave.

The pastor having paid his visit, other friends of the same order felt it their duty to visit the sick likewise, and thereby show themselves alive to a sense of their duty as charitable Christian people. But their visits did more harm than good to the patient. Because he had been dangerously ill, they chose to "improve the occasion" by a larger amount of cant than usually adorned their communications. Every male visitor hurled a chapter from the Bible at his head,

and every female a neat little assortment of "awakening" tract literature. They wore their Sunday faces and talked in a Sunday twang. Anything cheerful they eschewed on such occasions, and would allow the patient no lighter reading than epitaphs, till he was well enough to mix again in the usual doings of life. The utter repugnance Henry felt to talking of his new impressions to these people led them to suppose he was a hardened sinner, and they did not scruple to let him know that he showed no signs of grace as yet.

"Am I never to meet my *beau idéal* of a Christian?" he sighed, as he bade farewell to these Puritans, and turned again when left alone to the beautiful thoughts of the Christian of the Beatitudes. "Ah, here would be saints of the Saviour's calendar, would God I lived amongst such. Oh, to tell the world what I feel it does not know, what I feel it has forgotten—that the poor in spirit, the meek, the peace-makers are the blessed ones! These people cannot be the representatives of such an idea. Yet whom else do I know? Where else can I look? Oh, God! if Christianity be still left, let me see its home and rest in its harbour ere I die!"

And the prayer was heard in heaven. But not yet. Not yet was the answer to come, for many things were still to be taught him; much to be done to prepare him ere rest of spirit rewarded his search for truth.

CHAPTER IX.

JOINING THE CHURCH.

EVERY ONE resolves when in trouble or sickness to live a better life, if happily he be rid of his present afflictions. The percentage of those who keep their promises we fear is terribly small. Very few indeed are they who with the first returning glow of health, or with the first ray of hope that illumes their darkened horizon, do not forget their vows with the trouble that caused them, and return to live for self as though the world to come had no claim upon them, or was not worth caring for. Ungenerous souls! who never speak to God except for selfish ends, who bargain with heaven and forget to pay, who in smile and sunshine mock the Maker they frantically call upon when none else can aid them. Oh, broken sick-bed promises! well has it been said, "Hell is paved with good intentions." How shall we meet you in the place of doom? for nothing is lost. No prayer sent up to heaven but rises wave upon wave, till its pulsations like the water-rings strike the shores of the eternal; and no broken intentions that if kept would have helped to raise the soul to heaven, shall be missing in those caverns of unavailing regret, but shall join with the mocking fingers of the fiends to taunt us with our loss. Better, oh! far better, to have never resolved to win heaven if we afterwards lose it; than be devoured for ever by the gnawing pang of remorse, amid flames that unite to wreath themselves into the fearful words—*Too late!*

But the sick-bed lessons were not lost on Henry; and the resolves he had made to live for another life

were to be scrupulously kept. His whole life was changed. He could not conceal from those about him that he was possessed by a new spirit, and animated by new desires. But he said very little, and only God knew how deep down in his heart was the hope that inspired him. He returned to work; and almost his first act, after reaching Wentbridge, was to seek out the minister of the Baptist Chapel, and express his desire of being baptized. The interview was quite satisfactory, though the Rev. Mr. Cranch was a little disappointed at finding Henry did not claim to have been converted under his preaching. He introduced our hero to the families of two of his deacons, the ladies of which were very attentive to Henry's spiritual welfare.

Wentbridge Baptist Chapel is worth a word or two. It was not called by any singular old Testament name, it was much too respectable for that; it was not called after any saint, no saints being recognized there except the minister and flock below and the immersed elect who had gone to glory above, from the various Baptist congregations throughout England and one or two other countries. No, it was simply named after the locality in which it was situated, which happened to be New Road, so every one knew it as New Road Chapel. New Road Chapel was in very low water indeed—not that the Water Company neglected to fill their tank properly, but figuratively their fortunes were at a low ebb. Mr. White, their late minister, Henry was told by a deacon's wife, with a sigh, and a solemn shake of the head, had lately "seen infant sprinkling."

"Indeed," replied our hero; "and was the sight so shocking?"

"Oh no, not that; you don't understand me. His

'views' about the ordinance changed, and with them his ideas of what constituted a 'New Testament Church,' for Satan was permitted so to blind his eyes as to permit him to think babies could be added to the Church."

Henry confessed this was very sad, for he had never taken pains to learn what his religious opponents had to say for themselves on the point; and he asked what became of the unhappy ex-Baptist pastor after he had "seen" infant baptism.

"Oh, Mr. Pattison, he engaged in a long correspondence with the Bishop of London, and ended by being ordained a Church-clergyman, and the poor unfortunate creature is now a curate in some little country place at 90*l.* a year, and here we were giving him 200*l.* Ah, sir, vanity and carnal reason did it all. We are a despised sect, you see, Mr. Pattison; but then, did not our Lord say, 'Marvel not if the world hate you'? And the Church parsons are much more looked up to like; and so, what with this, and what with the books he was always a studying, he came to 'see' infant baptism. Poor creature, Satan has blinded his eyes, and a paltry salary he has got for it. They say he is happy; but I don't believe it myself. How can a man be happy, after the freedom of the Baptist faith he enjoyed so many years, with nobody to interfere with the way he managed the church except his deacons? To be sure, my husband had to call him over the coals occasionally, when he thought he hadn't preached sound, or when he attempted to infringe on the deacons' rights; but it soon blew over, and we always made it up when he gave in, which he in general did, and then we raised his salary a bit. Ah, poor fellow; and now he is bound down, and chained to the forms and ceremonies of the Prayer

Book, and can't move hand nor foot except the bishop lets him, and all for 90*l.* a year. No; I don't believe he is happy. Well, if the Lord opens his eyes, and makes him see non-conforming principles again, which I hope he soon will, me and Mrs. Rymer declares we will have him back again, if he likes to come; for you know, Mr. Pattison, we must forgive the erring, and restore a fallen brother! We've never done so well since he left. He was a clever preacher, very well read, and very humble. The poor used to like him wonderfully, he went amongst them so—rather more than *we* liked; for, after doing our best to make the place respectable and looked up to, it warn't nice to see our minister—the minister of New Road!—pottering about after all the low, dirty people, that liked to come to the free seats. I always told John it was low, and my words came true; for, instead of raising himself he has come at last to 90*l.* a year, and find his own surplice! Some of the people followed his example, and went to church after he left; and somehow or other his leaving hasn't done the cause any good. We were two years on "supplies;" but though no less than sixty-seven brethren occupied the pulpit during that time, the Church couldn't agree on a pastor, and I am sure we ain't a fastidious people; but really, as I often tells John, good ministers is a getting as scarce as good servants. I say, Pay well and you'll get well served; but they get scarcer and scarcer. Why, when I was a girl, Mr. Pattison, we never paid our maids more than 5*l.* or 6*l.* a year; and the minister thought himself well off at 1*l.* a week, with a house and coals and candles; and now they ask 200*l.* to 350*l.* It's the colleges as has done it all. They get such notions there, they do. I've often told John we'd better try a less educated man now New Road don't properly fill; but he says it would

never do to have our pulpit worse supplied than the Independents, for they are coming out so in Wentbridge with organs and stained glass, and I don't know what! But, thank the Lord, we are suited now, I think, that we have got Mr. Cranch. You know, Mr. Cranch was formerly Editor of the *Free Grace Times*. He is very sound, and has had a college education, and, what is a good point in his favour, he ain't married; so he will, I dare say, take a wife out of the congregation, if the Lord prospers his work amongst us. All the girls voted for him when the Church put it to a show of hands; and I really think a single man stands a better chance of raising the cause than anybody else.

"I am glad you have been to see Mr. Cranch; it is a great step seeing the minister. I make no doubt the Church will accept you; we want young men to work amongst us. There is a great work to be done here, Mr. Pattison; and clever young men are much wanted. There is open air preaching, and the village stations have been rather neglected of late amongst us, since the Lord bereaved us. I am glad we shall have you amongst us. I don't think Mr. Cranch will object to baptize you. The pool ain't been opened this four months now, though there are three candidates waiting, and you could be baptized together. It will be quite a little event. I'll tell John, and Mrs. Wood shall tell her husband that they must pass you, for you will be a blessing to us, I know. Oh, never mind, you needn't go before the Church if you are too timid; write your experience down, and direct it to the Church meeting at New Road Chapel, that'll do. We'll make it a little easy for you, for we can't afford to lose such an active young disciple and pilgrim of Zion, as I see you'll turn out to be."

Henry went home and made an application for

baptism and subsequent membership, addressed to the Church assembling at New Road, Wentbridge. Poor fellow, it was all he could do; he had determined to live for God, and this was the plainest path of duty to him, and he was of course bound to follow the light he had. He knew well that he could not be a Christian without baptism; baptism was plainly by immersion, and to adults, in the instances of the rite recorded in the New Testament; and this, with the interpretation he could put on it, was his only guide. Now, it is a noteworthy fact, that all the sects which profess to abjure ceremonial religion, are the most scrupulous in their observance of such ceremonies as do commend themselves to their judgment. So Henry had always been taught, that persons who dared to depart from the Bible way of doing things, were acting in direct opposition to their rule of faith, and were sacrilegious and profane. To sprinkle where we are commanded to dip, or to baptize those who had not attained the age of the candidates mentioned in the New Testament, was to mar and misapply the rite, and disobey its divine institution, whatever might be said of its reasonableness or expediency. He felt quite certain then, however much he might object to the persons and practice of his dissenting acquaintances, that he could not follow religion without uniting himself to the Baptists; and perhaps, if the Bible, and the Bible only, is our rule of faith, it would be difficult to prove otherwise.

Having sent in his letter, he awaited patiently the result of his application.

We shall take the liberty of following the letter to its destination, and introduce our readers to a rather peculiar scene.

Be it known then, that the Baptists and Indepen-

dents govern themselves, and transact their ecclesiastical affairs in the following fashion:—The minister for the time being is of course nothing more than the hired servant of the congregation, which is divided into "the members," or those who have been "received," as it is termed, "into fellowship with the Church," and "the hearers." The members are the only part of the congregation who have any voice in the management, and they elect four or six of their most influential and well-to-do men to conduct their affairs, subject to the approval of the members at large. About once a month, or oftener if necessary, they meet for business, generally of an evening, in the vestry or schoolroom. The minister takes the chair, supported by the deacons and confronted by his flock; with the mere hearers he has nothing whatever to do, they are without the pale of the "Church." The meeting is opened by an extempore prayer, and the singing of a hymn appropriate to the business in hand; and then they go to work, when there generally ensues a similar scene to the parish meeting, with which we are all familiar.

There will be of course in every community certain persons, whose spirits can only be charmed by the music of their own voice, and who never miss an opportunity of addressing any assembly foolish enough to listen to them. If these people attend a dissenting prayer-meeting they deliver heaven a lengthy theological lecture, which is made to include a dissertation on the state of the world in general, and their "cause" in particular. Public and extempore prayer to them is a luxury they could ill dispense with, for the patient heaven, to which their lecture is addressed, is the only audience that will listen without showing signs of getting fidgetty. These men are great at church-meetings. You wouldn't catch them praying by book,

nor worshipping God in any church that refused to let them have a finger in its management. As a rule, they are great pests to the minister, thwarting all his purposes, and interfering with all his projects; it has been found impossible to get rid of them except by putting them in office, when it becomes their turn to be bullied. The dissenters have anticipated Mr. Stuart Mill's reform projects, for they not only allow the ladies the right of voting, but of taking part in the ecclesiastical deliberations. Indeed, with the exception of the busy-body part of the male section of the members, the ladies have these meetings all to themselves; for there are few men who have not something better to do than to rise and propose "that the chapel-cleaner be provided with a new flannel and scrubbing-brush," or second somebody else's proposal "that the chapel ceiling be whitewashed;" for it must be remembered that the minister can do neither of these things on his own responsibility—that would be unconstitutional. When any one seeks admission to such a community, he first presents himself to the minister, who, if satisfied of his fitness, bids him apply by letter or in person to the Church-meeting, which deliberates on the eligibility of the candidate, and decides by show of hands *pro* or *con.* If the case be favourably entertained, one or two of the brethren are deputed to make inquiries, see the candidate, and thoroughly cross-examine him as to his evidences of conversion, date of "convictions," cause of same, &c., &c. They report to the Church the result of their investigations, and it is put to the vote if they shall admit the candidate to their number. No just cause or impediment having been found why he should not be considered a Christian, he is informed that he will be received, which is generally done by the minister coming and shaking hands with him at one of the Sunday

services, and saying civil things to him, including a text of Scripture. Should the neophyte desire to remove to some other town, he must get a "letter of dismission" to the Church of the same "order and faith," as they say, from that which he has left; and without this passport, which is not given unless he bear a decent character, no regular dissenting body will have anything to do with him.

The evening having arrived when Henry's application was to be considered, with those of the three other candidates who had "come forward," Mr. John Mawley, pork-butcher, the senior deacon, and husband of the lady who had taken such a kind interest in our hero, opened the meeting with prayer.

Mr. Mawley always began in a very low tone of voice, and with extremely slow utterance, as he deprecated any idea of going before the throne of grace "like the unthinking 'orse rushing into the battle;" but as he warmed with his subject, he grew louder and faster, till, getting red in the face, and perspiring at every pore as his arms went up and down, accompanying a similar motion of the body, he ran down again, like a machine wound up for ten minutes on its last pulsations.

This was a great occasion; their new pastor had only been with them six months, and the fallen cause was rising again under his supervision, they were met that night in solemn council, not for any mere scrubbing-brush-and-flannel business, but to decide on the evidences of grace of four candidates for communion with them.

"Thou art a leadin' of Thy scattered flock agen to the green pastures, and a feedin' of Thy sheep with a pastor after Thine own 'art; Lord, give him souls for his 'ire! Lord, give him seals to his ministry!"

—("Amen!" from several brethren, and from the marriageable Misses Miffin.)—"Lord, look down on this poor, dark, benighted Wentbridge! We bless Thee that though Egyptian darkness does enshroud the place, there is a bright spot where Thine Israel dwells. Oh, restore the almost fallen cause at New Road! Lord, let Thy dust[1] live to see New Road flourishing again, as it was before the henemy—like the wild boar out of the woods—destroyed the 'edge round about Thy garding, and spoiled Thy pleasant place. Lord, prosper New Road; rejoice Thy poor dust's 'art; and let Thy dust's dust, and Thy dust's dust's dust see the mercy Thou 'ast in store for the Israel of Thy grace. Ain't we been a cast down cause long enough, Lord? Ain't scores of Thy servants occupied our pulpit these months past, and Thou 'ast at last sent us a pastor who shall feed Thy people, and go in and out amongst us, declaring unto us the good things of Thy word? Lord, be gracious unto us! feed us with fat things: feed us with 'wine on the lees, with wine on the lees well refined;' give us to eat of the finest of the wheat, even with the pure Gospel truth—free grace doctrine."—("Amen!" from several.) —"And now, Lord, 'ere we are a met together for a solemn purpose: these dear disciples of Thine, as we trust they hare, seek to be united to this 'ill of Thy Zion. May they be guided aright! Give 'em to see and 'andle and feel the good things Thou knowest how to give Thine own. Oh, may their young 'arts be kep' from all Popery and superstition, from all 'works,' and from climbing up to Thy fold another

[1] "Dust" is a cant term for an humble servant of God. It is commonly used by the lower class of Baptists when praying about themselves. "Dust's dust's dust,"—Thy servants' grandchildren.

way than Thine own! Oh, lead 'em from the City of Destruction![2] and don't let 'em perish in the Slough of Despond; send 'em to the Interpreter's house and the Valley of 'Umiliation; and bring 'em to glory at last."

Much more followed in this strain; and after a few minor matters had been settled, Mr. Cranch, the pastor, said, in his blandest tones, that "he had a most pleasing task to perform that night: he had for some weeks been engaged with four dear young disciples, who were desirous of uniting themselves with the Lord's people at New Road. It is very sweet to see the young coming forward in this way; and it is especially gladdening to your pastor's heart," he continued, "as showing that my work is owned of the Lord. It is most gratifying to me, I assure you, dear brethren and sisters, to find that my labours amongst you are not without fruit. I will briefly state the cases. The first is that of a dear young girl, Matilda Frampton. She was first led here on the Sabbath I preached on the fall of the houses in Green Street, and was awakened. She had been in the habit of attending the services at the Catholic Chapel, and has, I believe, had several interviews with the designing priest—you know they are always getting our dear young folks in their vile clutches,—it appears that she was very much attracted towards their heresy, and would have joined them had not her soul rebelled against the works, works, works, of that creature-exalting religion. In mercy she was led by Providence to New Road, and heard here that there is nothing to do in a free-grace gospel; and it was just what her poor

[2] Figures taken from Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," esteemed by the Baptists only second to the Bible.

troubled soul wanted. We sang that sweet hymn, if you remember, after sermon,—

> 'Only believe, and you shall be saved,
> And heaven is yours for ever.'

"She came into the vestry and we sat there a long time talking. It appears that some of her friends are Papists, and lately, when the fever was so bad in Wentbridge, some Sisters of Mercy sneaking about our streets, intruded themselves into the house where they lived, and by their winning and deceitful arts succeeded, after nursing two of the members through the fever, in inducing them to see a priest. This is how the dear girl was so nearly losing body and soul, by their Satanic arts, but I rejoice to say her experience is very sweet, and she will tell it in her own artless way to-night.

"The next case is that of a dear young brother, employed at Allen's, the greengrocer. He went six weeks ago birds-nesting with some gay companions, who are in the habit of spending their Sabbath afternoons in the fields. They were unsuccessful that day and got caught in a heavy shower of rain, which spoilt Richard Pottington's clothes. On his way home he was led to reflect that this was a judgment on him for his Sabbath-breaking, and he accompanied his dear father to chapel in the evening, when I preached from those affecting words, 'Adam, where art thou?' He was awakened to a sense of his depravity, and declared next day that he was saved—yes, saved, dear friends. At ten minutes to eight on the Sabbath evening I preached from the words, 'Adam, where art thou?' He declared to me the very first time I saw him, with a fervour and holy boldness I shall never forget, that he shouldn't be frightened if

he had to die that day, for 'I can lay hold,' said he, 'I can lay hold.' Sweet experience, brethren, was it not? He commenced to preach the next week, and though he found great difficulty of utterance, as it was in the public streets, I am told that the Lord visibly moved his work, for a clergyman who was passing at the time actually received a tract from him and put it in his pocket; he was seen shortly after to take out his pocket-handkerchief and pass it over his eyes, doubtless to wipe away the tears that the dear youth's touching story had produced. Oh, may conviction reach even his benighted heart!" ("Amen!" from the whole assembly.)

"The third case is that of another dear young sister, who had been in the habit of sometimes playing at cards, reading novels, staying away from chapel, neglecting her Bible; three times, she told me with heaving bosom and tears streaming down her cheeks, she had been to the circus, twice to a concert, and once she had danced,—and she the daughter of Christian parents! Harrowing it must indeed have been to their dear hearts (you know the Snivells are some of our oldest members) to see their child pursuing this downward path and hurrying on with eager strides to perdition; but she too was arrested and plucked as a brand from the burning.

"That sermon on the fall of the houses was very much 'owned,' it would appear, and she, too, was awakened that night. You remember a young girl being taken out of the chapel in hysterics, that was Pleasant Snivell; her dear father and mother called me in to see her the next day, and though her experience was not so clear as it might have been, I have a good hope for her on her dear parents' account. She will appear before you also.

"I have still another case, and of this I am not so certain as of the rest. You know that for some time an apprentice of Dr. Flaxman's has attended our chapel, Henry Pattison I mean; he called to see me some weeks since. He appeared very nervous, and could not give at all a clear experience; he seemed very reluctant to show me his state of mind, and gave me the shortest possible answers. I have an idea that young man thinks more than he cares to speak of. I could not make out that he owed any of his convictions to my preaching. He is very reserved, but seems more intelligent than the ordinary run of our young brethren. I hope he is not led away by carnal reason. He has lately been very ill, and this seems to have alarmed him: he seems very anxious to be baptized, but it appears that he cannot trace his impressions to any sermon or passage of Scripture laid to his mind, so that I scarcely know what to say about the case. However, I will read you his letter, for I could not induce him to appear in person.

"'*To the Baptist Church assembling at New Road, Wentbridge.*

"'DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—

"'I am almost a stranger to you, though I have attended your chapel for some three years. I am quite convinced that it is the duty of every one to endeavour as far as possible to obey the Gospel of Christ. I am anxious to do all I can to love and serve God, and become a good Christian. I am unbaptized, though I believe all that the Saviour and His Apostles taught, and love the teaching too. I am anxious therefore to receive Baptism as soon as possible, for I desire to be a follower of Christ. I am told that

you require your candidates to specify the exact time and place of their conversion—this I cannot do. I never remember the time when religion and its claims had not a certain influence upon me; it has been growing ever since I came to think at all about God: it was certainly very much increased during the severe illness I have lately passed through, for I saw that I had not lived to God but for self, and resolved then, as He should help me, to live nearer to Him for the future. This is all my experience. I hope it will satisfy you, and beg to subscribe myself,

"'Your most obedient Servant,
"'HENRY PATTISON.'

"Now, brethren, you see this is a very meagre affair; there is no unction at all about it. Besides being very 'legal,'[3] he does not seem to see that all our righteousness is as 'filthy rags.' I fear he has learnt some of Dr. Flaxman's Wesleyanism. I have talked to him, but cannot shake him in his belief that he can't get to heaven without being good. I fear he is not trusting to faith. It is for you to decide."

There was a pause, the pastor sat down, and conversation on the cases was freely indulged in amongst the members; at last a brother in the body of the room got up and said that "there was little doubt the three first cases were all right, but the last was as their dear pastor had said, a very hindifferent case. Probably the young man meant right, but he was higgerant, very higgerant, and unedicated in gorspel trooth, he seemed to have a very 'dooty faith,' view. Still he might be improved. They couldn't afford

[3] Their cant phrase, implying a belief in the efficacy of good works for salvation.

to lose anybody just now, they must raise the cause somehow, so he proposed this happlicashun should be received, and that one or two brethren should do as the Apostle did and try to teach him the way of God more perfekly."

This was received with a general "Hear! hear!" especially from the deacons and their wives, who were all on Henry's side. It was then proposed that the brother who had just spoken, and the deacon Mawley should wait upon Henry and see what they could make of him.

After this had been arranged, the other candidates were called in one by one from the side room where they had been waiting; having been introduced to the Church, they were desired to stand up and relate their experience. Matilda Frampton was a rather modest-looking girl about nineteen; she was very nervous as she faintly endeavoured to tell how she had given up her Popish ideas, and abandoned all attempts to go to heaven by works, and cast her soul on free grace, and "found peace" in believing. After assuring Mr. Cranch it was all through his "beautiful preaching," and that she should have cause to thank him for ever for telling her how to be saved, she was allowed to withdraw, and the next case, that of Richard Pottington was called on. He stepped boldly into the room, bowed to the chair and the meeting, and paused to look impudently around him. He was short and stout, with a round, red, greasy-looking face suffused with a hypocritical smile; he was dressed in black, with the white tie in which he used to hold forth in the streets on Sundays; he had evidently come prepared with a telling experience. He showed how his depravity, as manifested in playing pitch and toss on Sundays, and cheating at marbles, in frequenting music-rooms, and in drinking and smoking and

Sunday birds-nesting was all put a stop to at a quarter past four on the 17th of last June, when he got wet out in Whitemoor fields as a judgment on his evil ways; and how he was thoroughly, completely, finally, effectually, and God-glorifyingly, Satan-confoundingly[4] saved, under the telling, powerful, man-debasing, heaven-exalting, awakening discourse from the affecting words "Adam, where art thou?" Turning to Mr. Cranch he declared he should be a star in his crown in heaven, and ended by an appeal to the Church, to receive him into their number, 'umble and youthful though he was.

Then came Pleasant Snivell, who finished her experience by another fit of hysterics, and was led out of the room into the vestry where certain restoratives, not supplied by the company who attended to the tank, were kept ready for emergencies. All the cases being favourably regarded, it was agreed that if the brethren appointed to look after them reported satisfactorily, they should be baptized forthwith. A few weeks after, another meeting was held, and when the other business had been arranged, it was reported that Henry's case was not so bad as was at first supposed, and that Mr. Mawley and his lady were quite convinced that he was a child of grace, though as brother Holloway said, he was "very higgerant of the gorspel."

So, at last, Henry was received, and no one of them knew him, no one of them saw an inch below the surface; and he rejoiced that they did not, for he instinctively recoiled from their unctuous advances. His fellow-members thought him proud, for he never

[4] Vulgar Dissenters affect the use of compound words to a great extent.

associated with them, and though he taught for the love of God some of the children in the school, he held himself aloof as much as possible and went on his way, trying to follow Him whose look of love guided him through all, and supported him amidst everything.

CHAPTER X.

LIFE WITH A NEW AIM.

Two years have passed since Henry became a Baptist, his apprenticeship has expired, and being delivered from the Flaxman household he has entered as a student at St. John's Hospital, London. The resolves he made in his dangerous illness have not been forgotten. His newly infused goodness was not as the morning clouds and the early dew which soon pass away, on the contrary his conversion to God was a progressive work, and every day saw its increase.

We entirely disbelieve the accounts, of which we so often hear, of persons suddenly becoming saints; there may be, and probably is, in most religious men's lives a turning-point, when the bud of early piety bursts like the opening flower into maturity; but those who from a life of wickedness suddenly profess to be fit for heaven, as suddenly return "as dogs to their vomit, and as the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

Henry daily grew to love God and heavenly things more and more, and as time went on and he saw the abundant treasure with which the hands of religion

were laden, and how it could transform as by touch of magician's wand, dull, dreary, sinful existences into lives full of radiant hope, burning charity, and fervent devotion, he became daily more and more seized with the desire of making others share in his growing happiness, and to enrich them with that treasure he had so happily found.

Heaven-born Love has no taint of selfishness. Selfishness is centripetal, charity is centrifugal. Earth-born greed seems to draw everything to itself: treasure from the world's utmost limits; pleasures from every source, however distant; fame from everything, however vain or insignificant, that can in any sense be made to minister to its desirer. Self is at the bottom of nine out of ten even of the proposals and schemes for benefiting the world, disseminating knowledge, or widening the field of science.

In the vast majority of instances, the principle that sets the orator's florid words a-going, that animates the philosopher in his researches, that sends the explorer across the arid deserts or the fields of waters, that drives the author's pen or binds the statesman to his post is simply, SELF. The orator's words may have been the new life of his hearers, the philosopher's researches may have added a new star to the glowing firmament of human lights, the author's pen may have redressed the most crying evils of his age, the statesman's master-hand may have been his country's salvation, the explorer may have added new territory to the map and have placed at our feet new luxuries and new means of getting them; *but self and its glorification* was the final cause of all, of course with many noble exceptions, so rare as to prove the rule. And if we shall analyze these exceptions, what do we find? Simply this in every instance,

associated with them, and though he taught for the love of God some of the children in the school, he held himself aloof as much as possible and went on his way, trying to follow Him whose look of love guided him through all, and supported him amidst everything.

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another principle equally powerful, yea, a thousand times more potent, has been within to counteract self,—heaven-born *charity*, self-abnegating, self-sacrificing *love*. Charity, we said, was centrifugal; like the rays of the sun always going forth with light and warmth for the distant, it ever seeks another object on which to exercise itself.

God is love, and God is always going out of Himself—always radiating. Love caused creation. Love must have objects to manifest itself by. Love built this beautiful world, adorned it as a fair garden, clothed it with a mantle of loveliness, made it a home for man, carpeted it with an enamel of fair verdure, hung it round with a tapestry of luxuriant flora, covered it with the blue sky for a roof, and then, filling it with everything that could delight the senses He had blessed him with, made man its tenant. But this was not all love's work. Take the telescope of the early inventors, and you shall see the gems of heaven's azure vault are worlds far larger than our own, and probably as richly adorned with beauty for perhaps ten thousand times more worthy tenants. And you shall go on taking still more powerful telescopes, and you shall go on finding out still more worlds beyond the field of your former reach of vision, till you invent the most powerful instrument you can imagine, and there shall still lie beyond fields of space besprinkled with stars, till you are lost in contemplating the fearful majesty of God. And, overcome by the gigantic and the distant, you seek to penetrate the minute and proximate; you take a child's microscope, and begin your search at the object that may happen to be handiest, and wonders pass before you, and you find "things are not what they seem" at all; you see on every hand, life that you had never dreamed of, and

creatures as busy in their enjoyment of it, as the inhabitants of your own world. And so you go on, increasing your optical power till you find insects with parasites, and these parasites with other parasites, and animalculæ so minute, that you get as lost in that which is all about and around you as you were in the untold distances of which astronomy was speaking.

And when you have finished, and have spent years of research into space above and the earth beneath, in the waters under the earth, in the air around you, in the bowels of the mountains, in the globules of water that compose the rivers that rise amongst them, in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, and reflect on the Creator, from whose plastic hands all this has sprung, and ask why the Infinite has occupied Himself thus, you are compelled to answer, "Love did it all." Love led God out of Himself to reflect Himself in His works, and to create beings to enjoy the life He had endowed them with, and to make man in His image, whose glorious privilege it should be to know Him, and be the recipient of His bounty. But love did more still. Love so far led God out of Himself, as it were, that, when His creature, man, had rebelled against His authority and forfeited His favour, He annihilated Himself, so that He left the heaven of His glory, to descend to our misery, stepping from His throne of light to earth, from earth to take man's form, from that to become what His Word declares a "worm and no man," and all that He might raise from the dust His fallen creature, and restore him his forfeited possession.

Love goes out of itself. Love radiates; and when any one gets a spark of this divine charity, it will carry the man out of himself too, and lead him to spend and be spent for God, as the sea, receiving the

drops of heaven, sends them back again by evaporation.

It was thus that Henry as he came to know and love God, came to recognize and love God's image in his fellow-man. The charity implanted in his bosom taking root, sought to shelter under its shade every object of misery with whom he came in contact; and he found abundant scope for its exercise in the profession to which he was so ardently devoted. When he entered on his hospital studies, he took apartments close to the scene of his labours; and selecting from his fellow-students a somewhat kindred spirit in the person of James Dalton, whom he had little trouble in inducing to board near him, set to work, now that he was unfettered, to attain the mastery of the noble science to which he had applied himself.

Going to work as he did, and surrounded with abundant opportunity of acquiring knowledge, he could not fail to succeed. Yet there was arising within him another passion greater than his passion for surgery and medicine—a passion that challenged the latter, and that showed by daily increasing signs that it was contesting for the mastery of his life and aims—love for the souls of men. As Henry came to know more of what God had done in creation, as he came to contrast the meanness of the present life, with what we can readily conceive the life of heaven to be, and thought how far short our conceptions must ever be of the reality; as he reflected, moreover, what ineffable joy must be the lot of those who spend their blissful eternity in the contemplation of the Infinite One, and remembered that his fellow-men by myriads were living in utter forgetfulness of their Maker, and entire carelessness of their noble heritage and destiny,

and all this against the will of that Divine Being whose are all things and for whom are all things,—he began to have a misgiving that he was not in his right place or at his right work altogether, while he devoted the great bulk of his time to earthly affairs and pursuits. There were people all around living without God, and in fact knowing nothing about Him; never thanking Him for mercies received, or imploring Him for what they stood in need of; having no hope beyond the satisfaction of their present desires, and no aim at anything that was more distant than what they could see; dying like the beasts that perish, altogether ignorant of the Saviour who shed His blood for them, or the home beyond their present toil and misery that was theirs for the seeking. And while he pondered over these things, and recalled scenes that were only too vivid in his imagination, he reproached himself for looking idly on, while men—his fellow-men, his Saviour's purchased ones—were hurrying down the dark stream of time, and dropping ever and anon into the unseen, without a warning.

One night he was thinking thus, a few months after he entered St. John's; he had been talking with Dalton about the awful spiritual destitution of London, and the comparative impossibility of alleviating it. Dalton was a good fellow in his way, but cared little or nothing about religion. He thought all creeds were equally good; that it was but little consequence what you believed, so you were "upright and downstraight," as he used to call it. But he did think it was not quite the thing in a Christian country that people should live and die and never know who made them; as a mere matter of information he thought that "little matter ought to be looked to."

Dalton had just come home from a visit to an out-patient, who was fast dying, and whom he had undertaken to visit for one of the doctors, who felt an interest in the case from a scientific point of view. He occasionally saw things that horrified even his phlegmatic and matter-of-fact mind; and to-night he talked to Henry of what he had just left.

"I have had a queer case down Bermondsey way, Harry, just now."

"How do you mean?"

"Oh, poor Walters, you know, can't live twenty-four hours longer; I told him he was going fast, and, of course, you know, old fellow, advised him to make his peace with God, and all that sort of thing. He made no answer, and I soon discovered he didn't know what I was talking about; and I found he couldn't read, had never been inside a church, didn't know what a Bible was, or who God was, nor how to pray, and from what I could gather he might as well have been an inhabitant of Timbuctoo as of Christian England. I say, old fellow, it's awful, it really is, to think of the money we spend in England on parsons and religion and all that sort of thing, besides sending shiploads of Missionaries and Bibles to the heathen, and then when one comes to look into the condition of our own poor people at home, find them as badly off as any savages that ever luxuriated in nudity."

"But did you not try to instruct the poor man?"

"Well, you know, I can't be Methodistical and talk good and all that sort of thing myself, but I said I would send the clergyman round to him if he didn't object. He was quite sensible, but his wife, poor wretch, as ignorant as he, said 'it warn't no good botherin, the parsons hadn't done them no good

when they were well, nor ever came to see them, and it was no good a talking to poor sick folk as hadn't no larning, about what was a going to happen after death.' So I didn't like to be Methodistical, and I said no more about it; but, hang it, I shouldn't like to die like a dog myself I must say; perhaps its because I think we ought to encourage a brother professional. I think the vicar on one side of the bed, and the family doctor on the other, with the lawyer at the foot, the *beau-idéal* of a nice respectable death-bed. I do indeed!"

Henry thought much about the dying English heathen; he felt it would be useless for him to go and see him, as Dalton declared that to excite the patient would inevitably hasten his death; so he contented himself with praying for him, and tried to forget the sad circumstance. He had heard of similar cases before, but scarcely believed it possible there could be so much of darkness amidst such light of knowledge. But as night drew on he could not rest for thinking of poor Walters, whose sands of life were hastening so fast away. So he found out his friend, and declared he would "go and see the patient as a visitor from the hospital, and try to teach him some words of prayer before he died."

"Well, just as you like, old fellow. I'll tell you where to find him right enough, only be cautious and don't go and excite him, that's all. Look here; go down Old Kent Road till you come to Mercer Street, on the left, fifth turning I think, butter-shop at the corner. Go down Mercer Street till you come to No. 12, then there's a court very narrow; go up this court and you'll find yourself in Bright's Gardens; look out for No. 7; there is a black door, you'll see a bit of cord comes through the middle of the panel, pull that

and the door will open. Then up the stairs you go till you reach the fourth floor, and up the last flight go as far as you can till you hit your head against a trap-door; knock at that, and you'll be let into the room where Walters and his wife and four children all pig together, poor wretches, almost as badly off as original and only genuine Cherokee Indians; but for heaven's sake don't break your neck over those ricketty stairs; and I say, Pattison, don't trust to the banisters, they are suffering with vertebral debility and confirmed caries."

Henry sallied forth with his New Testament in his pocket, mentally praying God to help him, and bring this fellow-creature into something like a fit state to meet his Maker. He found the house and room as directed, and entering by the hole in the floor, was at last in the room of the dying costermonger. He had been ill a few weeks, and so unprepared was the poor family to stand against the poverty ever consequent in such circumstances upon disease, that already everything was pawned that would fetch the merest trifle. The poor little children tried to earn a few pence by the sale of matches or watercresses, and that was all they could get now that the bread-winner was laid by for ever. And there, on a wretched heap of straw, about a yard and a half square, lay the poor creature on whose breast the icy hand of death was placed so heavily. Going straight to him with eyes full of tears, for such scenes were altogether new to our hero, he knelt down at the man's side, telling the wife he came from the hospital and from Mr. Dalton.

"Ah, Mr. Dalton, sir, has been very kind indeed to us. I am sure I don't know what we should have done this last few days if it had not been for him; he is a nice kind gentleman; he gave me half-a-

crown the last time he was here, and to-day he put 4*s.* into my hands to get what he ordered in the way of nourishment like for the poor man—ah, poor John, he won't be wanting much more, I fear, sir; I am sure his eyes is a scaling over, and his breath gets awful bad."

"Now," said Henry, "I want to talk to your husband a little; I have something to say to him particularly."

So with heart lifted up toward God, he implored aid to help him to instruct the sufferer. He told him in language so simple that an infant must have understood him, and in tones so earnest and sweet they could not fail to arrest the most careless, of the God whose we are and before whose bar the listener must soon appear; he told him of sin and what ruin it has brought our race, and how he, the dying man, was a sinner too; he told the story of the Cross, with such touching emphasis, as made himself to shed tears, and the poor man to stare with wonder and amazement as he learned, for the first time, that any one cared for him; and then he told him how one act of heartfelt contrition, united to a real faith in Christ and his all-atoning death, and real love for Him who had died in his place and opened the way of salvation for him, with the resolution that he would be God's servant if opportunity were given him, would save him. And as he taught the man it seemed as though he was being understood, for the dying costermonger exclaimed,—

"I am sorry. I always was sorry when I did wrong, for I always somehow knowed it wouldn't do me no good in the end; and though I ain't had no larning, I think I see something what you mean, young man, and I like the talk, I do. I think it means this: somebody made us, of course, co's we

couldn't have made ourselves, and we haven't done our duty to our Maker, and He might serve us as He liked, but He has forgiven us, and wants us to make it up with Him; and I am sorry I haven't always been good, like my little Betsy as died when she was four year old, and I wish I could be good, for if I have done God or anybody any wrong, I wants to make it up with them, I do. I don't owe nobody any ill will, I don't, indeed."

So Henry knelt down and prayed very distinctly a very simple prayer; and the prayer was not wasted, for it found its way through that black ceiling, and out of that wretched house and filthy court and polluted atmosphere, through the regions of space, till it was borne by the hands of angels, who stood watching there, to the foot of the throne of the Majesty on high. And the long night through, the young student stayed by the bed-side, keeping vigil with the wife of the dying man, and as the night waned and morning began to break, the restless patient, aroused from the half-unconscious state into which he had lately fallen, looked at Henry very hard, and said,—

"If He wants—to—make—it—up—God—you—call—Him—or—Him as died on the Cross—it—was—very—kind—*I* don't—owe nobody—any—grudge—I—am—sorry I—ain't—pleased—God—and—I—wish—I could—do something—to—let—Him——"

* * * * * * * *

It was all over, he was gone; the stars shone through the little skylight above the corpse, and as they watched, they saw the angels who had gone to fetch Henry, and who had brought him and carried his prayer to heaven and returned to whisper the answer to the dying one's heart, tenderly take up that costermonger's soul, and bear it through

that dark ceiling, where the prayer had passed so lately, up to the throne of the King, to be received with His favour and welcome: while as the angels went their way, the same pale stars also saw the souls of learned, rich, and noble men and women of earth who *did* know who God was in life, and who were perfectly well acquainted with their duty towards Him, though they would not serve Him, hurried by exulting demons to the place where there is "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Henry felt instinctively that the man had not died in the utter ignorance in which he had lived, and rejoiced that his good angel had directed him to the mission which he could not but feel had been an useful one. He went home more than ever in earnest to try and do some good in the world before his turn came to die; some good that should live after him, and have its fruit in the life beyond: and he had abundant opportunity of doing it, for his profession was always bringing him into contact with poverty, misery, ignorance, and vice.

CHAPTER XI.

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER."

YES. The first murderer's question embraced the whole subject of man's relation to his fellow. In a thousand different forms that question has been, and is still being repeated by every child of Adam. Charity promptly replies, Yes! most truly yes! Self as promptly answers, No! most certainly

not! And so the battle wages, and will wage till heaven has heard the last sufferer's sigh, and earth has received the last drop of oppressed humanity's blood. Man had scarcely begun to live before he began to sin, and at the heels of sin came suffering, and suffering had no sooner begun its work than brother was called to account for brother; and thus far back up the stream of history when as yet it was but a rivulet, long ages back when the world's day had scarcely dawned and the page of its story was almost blank, this great question which men have echoed ever since and which is still now reverberating, "Am I my brother's keeper?" was first asked, and asked—ominous connexion!—by the first hater! the first murderer! Cain first asked God this question, and when the ages had rolled on, and the world's sun was climbing its meridian height, there appeared a sign in heaven and a voice divine gave utterance, and lo, the answer came, "Thy neighbour as thyself!"

The dragon's teeth sown in a soil, alas! only too favourable, had produced a destroying army, and the sons of Cain were legion; for earth had become the prey of evil passion, and hate and murder were rampant, and charity wandered about, a stranger in the land, till the God-man brought the cure for the world's deadly wounds, and the angels sang the Introit "Peace on earth, good will towards men," to the service of self-sacrifice of the Lamb of God; and the panacea for the world's ills, the golden maxims of the gospel, was left to work its way till it changed the desert into a garden, and the sighs of the oppressed and the wretched, to hymns of thanksgiving.

But it is a difficult lesson to learn, to love our neighbours as ourselves; in proportion as we do not, in the same ratio are we far from the kingdom of

God. If the captive's fetters do not gall *our* flesh, if the sick man's pains do not cause *us* suffering, if the pangs of the famishing do not gnaw our bosoms, if the shivering of the outcast does not pierce our garments and the tears of the sorrowing melt our hearts; if in fact with Cain we ask, with bold effrontery, Am I my brother's keeper? then may we rely, whatever our profession may otherwise be, however high we may stand in the world's opinion, whatever flattering tales our hearts may tell us, that we are Christians in name only, and have yet to learn the axioms of the religion of Him who was Divine Love enshrined in form of man.

Young Pattison's religion led him to deeds of charity and self-devotion, he could take no other view of Christianity than this. Any other idea of the gospel fell short of that which had been presented to him when the Sermon on the Mount first shone out in all its beauty in his dark soul in his illness, and by consequence was rejected, for he had there and then proved his idea of Christianity. He had exercised his right of private judgment, he had given his vote, and it was dead against the prevailing forms of Christianity by which he was surrounded. He had been invited to choose a creed, and he was making the best one he could for himself: charity was to be its first principle, so he went about doing good in his own way. His visit of mercy to the dying costermonger gave him a zest for similar deeds, and when he thought of the misery that surrounded him, he answered Cain's question with a vehement Yes! and set to work to alleviate it to the best of his poor ability, and he did wonders. Charity is a heavenly spark that will fire all it touches. If you don't want to be a confirmed philanthropist, spending

yourself for your fellows, don't *begin* doing good, for as sure as you do, you will be unable to stop.

There was a niggardly fellow who had never given more when the collection was made than a threepenny piece, that was the smallest silver coin the currency placed within his reach. One Sunday the plate was coming round, and had nearly reached his pew, when, feeling for his accustomed "mite," lo, he had nothing less than half-a-crown. He must give something, the collector knew him, and it would not do to let the plate pass him. Self said, "Anything rather than waste the *2s. 3d.*! never mind appearances." But Charity whispered, "You know you can afford *2s. 6d.*, or *5s.*, or *1l.* if it comes to that; be liberal for once, and put the lump of silver in the plate;" and he did; and having conquered self that time, it was easier to be charitable the next, and he became at last a man whose good deeds were on the lips of all who knew him.

Henry had begun as we have seen the work of instructing the ignorant, henceforth it was his delight to teach those who knew not God, all that he could tell them of heaven. Pursuing his hospital studies with unvarying attention, he yet found time to look after such cases as he could hope to do good to by visiting, so that he began to think the day would come when he should be compelled to abandon all, that he might work alone for God. He came day by day to feel that he in some sense was accountable for the ignorance and sin around him.

Did he meet a ragged and ignorant child, or a poor outcast wretch who seemed to think the grave less cold than the hearts of his fellow-men, he was certain to hear within him the voice of Him who asked, "What hast thou ever done for Me?" The feeling

was growing within him, that some day, perhaps not far distant, it would be his privilege to work for God and his neighbour altogether.

When he came to live in London he united himself to a large Dissenting Chapel in Southwark, and placed his spare time at the service of the minister to assist him in his endeavours to do good; and yet he saw but little to encourage him in the work of trying to reach the masses. He, with others of his way of thinking, had distributed some thousands of religious tracts, and given away many Bibles, and yet the people seemed never the better for it all; or if some few did come forward to assure his brethren of the benefit they had received by such means, he could not fail to see that they generally lacked either the fruits meet for repentance, or perseverance in the way of piety they professed to have found.

Amongst the other efforts for good in which he joined, was a "Lodging-house Mission," in the borough of Southwark, to which he was much attracted, as it seemed a likely source of usefulness.

These lodging-houses are places where tramps and people of the lowest grade of society sleep for 3*d.* a night. There is generally a large kitchen, a sort of common hall where these poor people take their food, in the house, provided with long benches and tables, with an immense fireplace at the end of the room, at which the lodgers can cook such food as they may bring in at night. In some twenty of these places Henry and his friends obtained permission to conduct for one hour a religious service on Sunday evenings. They generally met half an hour previous to the appointed time for their meeting in the houses, in the Ragged School situated hard by. They had a president who directed their efforts, and who

sent them out by twos to their different appointments. They were a singular lot of missionaries, and great was Henry's disappointment to see how utterly and completely they all failed to awaken the interest and sympathies of the persons to whom their advances were directed; and yet properly managed, what a fruitful source of good might this not have been.

The preachers were for the most part ignorant, vain, upstart, conceited lads of from sixteen to twenty years of age, who had just been through the state of excitement they were pleased to call conversion. No sooner had this taken place, than they one and all were bitten with the desire to don a white tie and suit of black, and preach to anybody or anything for any length of time. No sooner had they experienced enough conversion to enable them to "join a church," as they called it, than they considered themselves qualified to teach other people, no matter what their station. They were a greasy, cadaverous, supercilious set, and nobody found it out half so soon as those to whom they went to preach. These youths, for such they mostly were, were possessed by the idea that nobody could go to heaven unless they had experienced just the kind of feeling they had undergone, and had comported themselves in precisely the same manner. If any one did not read his Bible in the same places as they liked to do, or sing the same sort of hymns as they did, he was set down as a "sinner," and must be preached to forthwith. It was quite enough for holy young Perkins, the butcher's son, to know that the poor creatures in the lodging-houses were dirty and ragged, and did not attend Peniel Tabernacle, to assure him it was his duty to go and threaten them with the terrors of hell, and patronizingly offer them the

religion which he took pains to assure them had transformed him into something only less than an angel. To be rich and not be a member of Mr. Sturgeon's congregation, or to be too ragged and wretched to like to venture amongst such well-to-do people, were equally marks of a wickedness that only Mr. Sturgeon's evangelists were capable of combating. So as the Belgravians did not throw open their drawing-rooms to listen to them, and the poor outcasts' kitchens *were* thrown open, partly to convince the police of the pious habits of the landlords, Mr. Sturgeon's neophytes generally made their maiden speeches on the boards of the "Mint Lodging-houses."

Henry thought it would be useful if he assisted at this work, and so at first went as a companion to the initiated missioners, and while a postulant with them saw many things that would be truly ludicrous, if they were not equally painful. Poor and miserable as the listeners were, they were often fairly intelligent, and not seldom had been in a respectable position of life in former days; they were not slow to detect the shallowness, insincerity, and patronizing cant with which these young orators approached them, and consequently treated them and their discourses with the most supreme contempt, even when they did not resist as an unwarrantable intrusion their ministrations. But it must be understood this was not because they objected to religious instruction and consolation, but as one of them expressed it to the writer, in confidence—"We ain't quite fools, sir, though we are down in the mouth; we sees through 'em, bless your heart; we can reckon 'em up."

And, indeed, they must have been indifferent observers of men and things, which as a rule tramps are not, if they failed to detect the hypocrisy and

falsehood that lurked under the pious garb of many of their would-be teachers. One Sunday evening a lank, putty-faced, lantern-jawed young man thought he would improve the occasion of its being the eve of the execution of a notorious criminal at the Old Bailey. "Prepare! oh, prepare! my poor sinful hearers," exclaimed the preacher, "prepare for death! for you don't know how near death may be. Accept the salvation I offer you to-night, yes, to-night; for you little know how soon, like the poor man who meets his doom to-morrow morning at eight o'clock, it may be your turn to be hung!"

This was not flattering to the audience, and probably produced a tight sensation about their throats, even if it had no effect on their hearts. Some of the youthful aspirants to pulpit honours would go off into heroics, and astonish their hearers with a passionate rhapsody composed of words with as many syllables as their knowledge of the dictionary enabled them to lug into their discourse. On one occasion in Henry's presence, a middle-aged brother, with long black hair hanging like thatch over his eyes, extensive white tie, and grubby paws, illustrated the miseries of earth as contrasted with the heaven to which he liberally invited his audience straight away, by declaring that "his wife was more devil than woman." This astonished even the select company who heard the remark. Our disgusted hero wished the preacher no greater punishment than that his insulted spouse, if he had rightly described her, could have heard him!

Very seldom indeed did any of the lodgers take the trouble to lay aside the paper they were reading, the clothes they were patching, or the cards they were playing to heed the boisterous discourses addressed to them. Henry tried hard to discover if any instance

were known of real good having been effected by these ministrations, and failed to find a solitary case. He was often tempted to withdraw from a society so little suited to his taste, but could not abandon the work he felt sure might be made productive of good.

But, then, what could be expected from the principles on which these self-constituted teachers acted? They went on their errand, not so much to do good, as for the love of spouting. This was evident from the jealousy with which each regarded the other's efforts, and the ill-feeling manifested if one of the two brethren sent to each house monopolized all the hour, and left his companion no time to have his say—or, if having come prepared with a telling discourse, he were put in the back-ground, and made to do duty as clerk, while the other figured as parson.

It was not long before Henry was desired to take his part in speaking at these weekly services. He saw how it was the others were mostly unsuccessful in interesting their audience; he went a different way to work. First, he loved the people themselves; dirty, ragged, and degraded as they were, who was he, he thought, that he should patronize and domineer over them? To prove that he loved them was the only way to their hearts, he knew that. Then, again, he determined to talk as earnestly and plainly to them as possible; not lecturing them on knotty points of doctrine, but taking one of Our Lord's parables or a gospel incident, and setting it before them in its simple beauty. He felt he was not there to display his skill, but to try to save souls from the devil. The difference was speedily seen. The poor creatures would leave their occupation and arouse their attention when he began, and would thank him afterwards for trusting himself to come amongst them. They

could see he was not a cant, but really felt what he said, and wished to make them feel it too. He had reason to think his words would be useful to some of them when they came to die; it was evident they understood what he talked about, and he trusted God to bring some good out of it. He had seen the wretched women and the hardened men whom it was evident vice had been the means of reducing to their misery, sometimes wipe away a tear when they were told of Christ's unbounded love for them, which led Him to sacrifice His life on the cross that they might be saved; and he doubted not the memory of the scene it was evident their minds had depicted, would be recalled when death should be veiling temporal things and revealing the eternal concerns, when the ebbing tide of life should be carrying them out into the vast unknown. How little do we know of what passes within the minds of the utterly uninstructed, the dwellers in the deeper depths of the poverty of our great cities; their joys and sorrows, the story of their lives and the manner of their deaths, are almost as much hid from us as if they were of another race. The vast majority of people have come to think, to speak, and act pretty much as society commands them; when they speak or write, they unconsciously speak and write what they have read, or as their fellows do. If you want originality, you must have it from the man of great intellect, or from the fantastic growth of minds uncultivated. Our friends die pretty much as they live, with their ideas and utterances ready made for them beforehand. But the untutored and the wild, when they think at all, are at least original. You meet with some of the most poetic and beautiful ideas amongst the savage tribes; and if the poetry of the unlettered could be

written, or their thoughts transcribed, we trow it would surprise us to find how susceptible they are to the influence of the spiritual. Think you not the angels whisper of heaven, and tell of the prayer-hearer to the city Arabs? Think you it is only those who talk of their devotion who worship at the feet of the Eternal? Rather should we say that Heaven has some of its most cherished favourites, and the angels some of their most familiar haunts, amidst the dens and alleys of the most benighted spots.

It cannot be that these waifs and strays, who because they are out of the beaten road in the journey of life, and are by consequence lost sight of by us, are forgotten by the all-seeing eye of Him with whom we have to do. We see them not, we know not their privations or their sorrows; and they come amongst us and we know it not, and go from us and we reck not of it; but He who notes the sparrow as it falls, and cares for the flower that perisheth, bids His angels whisper of the home of royal wealth above, and tell of light and joy beyond; and we think, notwithstanding the work the demons do amongst the poor and ignorant, that the good spirits often go home there, as the bees from the spots where the honey hides, laden with treasure for the Master's board.

Oh, that we believed this! Oh, that we could give God credit for being able to instruct people without making them experience exactly the same feelings, and express them in just the same way, as we who have been to school ever since we could talk, and to church ever since we could run, and have read all that great minds have thought about God, and prayed as they have taught us, and thought as books have bidden us!

Let us go amongst these people, not to set up our

own standard for them to aim at, but, endeavouring to place ourselves in their position, teach by sympathy and love, not by threats of wrath against a lower level of imagination or sentiment than we have attained to.

If they cannot read your laboured treatise, give them a picture they can understand as they look at. If they fail to comprehend your mystic system of theology, tell them in few and intelligible words the simple truths God's Church would have them know, and you shall convert to Christianity men as ignorant and benighted as those whom St. Augustine conquered to Christ, or whom St. Patrick, or St. Columba, or St. Francis Xavier added to the roll of the saved.

It was no wonder Henry Pattison learned to smile at the absurdity of distributing box-loads of Bibles, hymn-books, and tracts amongst the wild men and women who dwelt in the haunts about the Borough. It was no wonder he was disgusted, and the people inattentive, when men stood up in their midst to discuss Election, Predestination, Justification, Sanctification, Bible History, Sacred Topography, or the like, instead of telling them simply by what means Heaven willed their escape from the lures of the world, the flesh, and the devil. There was nothing tangible about such teaching; you could not grasp it; it was shadowy, vague, unreal, mystical, abstruse, complicated. Nobody knew where to begin. There was a great work to be done, for which there could be no preparation, and which was to be begun and ended quite apart from anything they could do, and all in an instant.

As the old rhyme expressed it, they were told—

> "You can and you can't,
> You will and you won't;
> You shall and you shan't,
> You'll be damn'd if you don't."

Thus did our hero try his hand at missionary work, but his heart sadly misgave him when he contemplated what there was to do, and the means to do it with. Was it thus, he sighed, St. Paul taught the people of old Greece and Rome? Was it thus in olden time, whole nations were converted to the Saviour? Why would not the people hear the preacher? Why did the masses of London refuse the message of the Bible? Why so little good from so much effort?

And, day by day, he grew more anxious to see men brought under the power of what he considered to be the truth of God; little encouragement did he gain, and he feared it was because he was too proud to descend to more vulgar means of getting at the people. If the people would not go to the preacher, the preacher must go to them, it was argued. So out into the streets he went, in the lanes and alleys of the City, with Bible in hand, to read to those who could not read for themselves, and to explain to those who were unlettered. We laugh at the despised open-air preacher, but to a young man of Henry Pattison's composition it required no little heroism to brave the jeers and taunts of the passers-by as he tried to collect an audience from the streets.

It is very well to stand up and preach to people who have confessedly come to hear you; it is another matter to stand up at a street corner, and beginning to talk to the houses and flag-stones, wait till your ludicrous attitude attract the loungers and inquisitive. Of course many do this merely to get a certain notoriety and honour, others for the pure love of the melody of their own voice, but there is a class who, actuated by sincere endeavours to do good, subject themselves to a real penance to effect their end.

Daring enough on one occasion to preach in a court

tenanted by Irish people, he got very roughly handled for his pains, and narrowly escaped a broken head, by beating a curiously hasty retreat; but this did not deter him from his out-door efforts, though it made him more careful in the selection of his sphere of labour.

For two years he continued to work amongst the poor of London in this manner, ever impelled by a still stronger desire to extend the kingdom of the Friend of Sinners, yet constantly confronted by the fact that he and his companions had the wrong tools to work with; that they lacked the means of stemming the torrent of infidelity and indifferentism that was carrying away the people, and were powerless to retain any permanent hold even on those who professed to have been benefited by their instruction.

Still he prayed, and worked, and besought God to lead him right. He withheld his hand from nothing that held out the least hope of achieving good. With missionaries at the theatres on Sundays, and hired rooms on weekdays, whenever he could snatch an hour or two from his hospital work, he was there to help.

About the close of the second year of these engagements, the news reached him that his good mother had suddenly died—died, too, without the son of her heart near her. There was no time to send for him, and his sister Lucy alone was with her when she yielded up her soul.

He instantly set off for Merlington, on receipt of the news. The shock was terrible to him, for it was for his mother he had toiled at his profession; and now, with the prize almost seized, his hopes of in some measure repaying her devotion, were dashed to the ground, and though his sister Lucy was left, he felt as one destitute, with an aimless life.

The little home was broken up, the household goods disposed of, and Lucy came to London, to be with her brother, for he was now her only protector. They were not left without means, for the widow's income, which came to them, would suffice to keep them with economy, and the time would soon arrive when Henry would be earning his living. So they took apartments, and Lucy kept her brother's house, and exercised, not before it was necessary, a watchful supervision over him, lest with too much work he should injure his constitution. For his missionary efforts, as they did not interfere with his studies at the hospital, occupied the time that in other young men was given to the recreation all reading men require.

Henry soon came to see that it was his mission to spend his strength and efforts, and find his joy and recreation in "being about his Father's business." He sighed to be a missionary after the Apostolic sort, and daily prayed to be shown what it was he needed to make him one. He was heard, but the answer was delayed till he should be shown who were *not* the Apostles' successors—thus mysterious are the ways of God.

CHAPTER XII.

LUCY PATTISON.

OUR sketches have not led us much hitherto into the company of Henry's sister; it will now be necessary that the reader should know something about her. Lucy was tall and fair as the Saxon maids of ancient

story, slender and full of grace, with face so bright, and expression so open and winning, that to see her was to love her. Nature had been very kind to Lucy Pattison. Graces of mind and body had been bestowed with no niggard hand, and to crown all, she was good and kind as she was beautiful and clever. Not that she ever said much about religion, not that she garnished all her sentences with a sprig of Scripture, or flavoured all her discourse with a spice of theology. She was not a Sunday-school teacher, but many a little street child learnt lessons at Lucy's knee, though the instruction was not confined to Sunday; she never went to Dorcas meetings, though many a shivering woman or half-clothed babe was the warmer for Lucy's needle; she never sallied forth with a quiver full of arrows in the shape of severe tracts, yet many a one was the better for having talked to her; she had no tickets for soup, no orders for bread, and no Bibles to give away, yet somehow or other, poor starving people blessed Lucy Pattison, and children put her in their prayers when they said "Pray God bless mother and father, and John and Mary."

Her name was never to be seen in the chapel subscription lists either to the "Hullabaloo Indian Mission" or the "Ebenezer Defamation Society," yet the world was all the better for her living in it, though nobody knew anything of her good deeds, save the recording angel, who often made a good note about her. If you had asked the Rev. Albert James, B.A., to give you his private opinion about the young lady, he would probably have told you "that it did not appear to him that the young person had any of the marks of grace about her; she might be amiable, but so were many who were still on the

side of Satan; he had never been able to induce her to join the church, and he feared she was yet in her sins, and of the multitude who go down into the pit." It is probable that all the deacons and their wives would have endorsed this sentiment, for if Lucy had any Ebenezer piety at all, it was certainly not manifested after their fashion, and neither her talk nor demeanour gave evidence to their minds of the religion, which they supposed dwelt nowhere if not in the tongue.

She *was* intensely religious, but the secret chamber of her thoughts was open to none but God, who in that paradise of purity and love often communed at eventide, as He did with our first parents before the fall. Ay, her fair soul was pure as the bosom of the lily, or song of lark that sings at heaven's gate. For goodness is not dead yet, as some will have it; the waste howling wilderness hath here and there an oasis of rich beauty, but it is out of their track, and they only believe in the dry sand their own hard feet tread. We incline to think the world is much better than these gloomy puritans would have it. Vice walks abroad and arrests attention by its ugliness, but sweet innocence and virtue like best to hide from the rude gaze of the vain multitude.

Humility is ever the companion of true goodness, and she draws her sister graces out of the beaten path where men go, and they dwell together unnoticed by those who seek them not, and oft unheeded by all but God. The fairest flowers are not found by the highway side, but down in the wooded slopes, and under the shadow of the rocks of the watered valley.

Observation and talk are ever antagonistic to the growth of the deeper feelings of the heart. Devotion and love must be matured under cover, they are plants

too delicate to flourish under the withering blast of the outer world. To expose a deep feeling to our fellows is ever to lessen its depth in proportion to its extended area. In sorrow, the deeper grief lies hid like some castle wells, with narrow mouth but awful depth. The passionate demonstrative sorrow will soon dry up, its surface is too exposed to save evaporation. It is the sorrow hidden deep down through the heart's recesses that kills. The lover that brags of his mistress at every table will soon forget her, the story of the heart is whispered in secret.

The devotion of the greatest saints in the calendar never found vent in public utterance half so glowing, as the florid exclamations you may hear at the corner of the streets, or in the devotional meetings of the nearest Methodist chapel.

St. Francis of Sales used to tell the birds on the way side how he loved God, but he would not have told his neighbours what he told *them*, and the outshining radiance of the heavenly light within, as manifested in their deeds, was all the world knew of many a saint as bright as he.

How many sweet ones have lived and died on the borders of heaven, fed with daily food from the king's table, lost in its music and delighted with its perfumes, conversing with its inhabitants on their eternal weight of glory, of whom the world knew nothing and cared as little. No, *all* is not blackness and festering corruption here. Some parts of the dark picture are yet touched with gold that has not all become dim, and the withering blight of sin and the army of locusts from beneath, have left here and there a flower that will bloom in its beauty for ever above.

Though the Ebenezerites did not think so, Lucy was a Christian. Much to their disgust, she chose to unite

herself to the Church of England, a more congenial home for her order of piety than Dissent could offer. Religion *there* was at least intelligible, the Babel of the sects and their hair-splitting theology was out of her way altogether. Lucy had need of all her patience and sweetness. A year before her mother's death she injured her spine by a severe fall, and it was speedily discovered to be incurable. At times her sufferings were extreme.

She grew more and more to be a prisoner to her room; it was with the greatest difficulty she could take any exercise out of doors at all. It was evident she was to be an invalid for life, and yet she neither murmured nor repined. When summer came and the fields and woods invited the rambles of her friends, she was never heard to complain that she could not join them; and when the winter season set in and every one sought social pleasures, her pleasant smile as she declined the invitations, assured the observer that no bitterness of soul made inward complaint. She was good and patient, and did not know it. Hers was a living martyrdom, and she made no merit of it. No wonder she was clever, she read so much,—not that much reading will make every one a genius. It is genius makes the reader, not the reader a genius. The thinking soul can no more live without reading, than the hungry body without eating. And it is curious that reading with a well-constituted and powerful mind operates in a precisely similar manner to food on the healthy animal system. We take food, and having digested it, the elements of our nourishment reappear in a new form in the tissues of the body. So with reading; to take other men's thoughts and simply reproduce them as if our own, as many writers, preachers, and orators do, is simply

to let the mental nutriment pass through the mind undigested.

The right use of reading is to take the best thoughts, digest them, ruminate over them, and let their effect be our expanded ideas, our strengthened thoughts, our developed intellect. Some read, and when a grand idea is presented them, their first thought is, How will this do to reproduce? whereas the right reader takes the great idea, eats it, drinks it, and makes it his own by passing it through his mind till it has assumed perhaps a grander and loftier proportion than its originator ever dreamed of.

Originator! did we say? It would be harder to trace a great idea to its source than to find the cradle of the infant Nile.

Lucy's reading forced her to think. The ideas that made her well-cultivated mind their home, had not been admitted unchallenged; not one was there without good reason. Her mind was no way-side inn for thoughts to come and spend an idle moment in, and go their unheeded way. She could give a good account of all her mental guests. Her reading was not so extensive, as it was careful and thorough. She had been early taught to go to the best authors direct, in her studies, and the advice was the best any reader could have. If one fourth the time spent on the study of the homœopathic dilutions of great men's thoughts some paper-spoilers and ink-wasters produce, were bestowed on the study of the royal legacies true genius has left us, thinkers would not be so scarce, and the sinews of the intellect would not be the shrivelled threads that make imbeciles of our men, and dress-pegs of our women. So Lucy dealt as nearly at first hand for her mental food as possible, and by consequence was not a mental dwarf; not that

Lucy was a blue-stocking, nor was she strong-minded. No, she was thoroughly feminine, with heart as full of love and tenderness, sympathy and gentleness, as though she had no inner world to withdraw to. There was no affectation with Lucy. If she were ignorant in any matter she said so, and if you knew more than she, so much the better; she sat at your feet till you had taught her all you knew about it. She never learned the titles of books, and then bragged about her acquaintance with them. This would have been as dishonest to her mind, as for a shopman to boast of his acquaintance with a nobleman, because he had served him with a pair of gloves. And yet how many young ladies and gentlemen simper about Tennyson and Macaulay, Homer and Shakspeare, because they have had "In Memoriam" from the Circulating Library for four days, read a review of the immortal "Essays," know there is such a thing as the "Catalogue of Ships," and have heard Mr. Mouthewell spout "Hamlet." Verily the bragging glover is the less a hypocrite.

Lucy was a better student of the two than her brother. He was too far-reaching in his thirst for knowledge, too anxious to master a little of everything, to make a deep and hard thinker. Lucy inherited more of her father's intellectual power, and Henry more of his mother's determination to master circumstances.

Of course her love for her brother well-nigh amounted to idolatry, for somehow Henry made everybody love him, whose springs of affection had not lost themselves in the underground of their own selfishness. But then she was such a loving soul, and being very secluded, had no opportunity to dissipate her affections on flirtations as many girls do. Her

love was saving up at such a rate of interest and compound interest, that the happy recipient of the accumulating store, would have a treasure such as never falls to the lot of the man who gets a wife who has squandered her love by littles in a score or two of flirtations. But Lucy was doomed to love and pour out all her heart-devotion, and never win the object of her affection.

Poor invalids! who has chronicled the story of your *affaires de cœur?*

You can't make the hero of your story passionately in love with a lady with one arm, or send your lovers courting on crutches. Yet have not the halt, the lame, and the sick their loves? Though they lack romance, and cannot be expected to speak blank verse, or assume dramatic attitude, in common life they love. And though in romances heroines never "take a sixth part three times a day," or swallow any other poison by doses except the fatal glass that ends their story, the tender passion has no less sway over the invalid and the cripple than it has over the hale.

James Dalton was, of course, a constant visitor at Henry's rooms, and Lucy had no sooner beheld his handsome, manly, honest face and figure, and listened to his out-spoken, sensible utterances, than she loved him, as only a girl can love who has never flirted. Of course she did not know that she was in love, that is only a flirt's way of doing things; she only put James Dalton by turns on the pedestal of every hero of history, ancient and modern, of poetry and of prose, who was allowed a place in her mental Pantheon; so that James Dalton came to be considered as embodying in his single person the virtues, graces, accomplishments, and excellences of all the

men of classic story who had created favourable impressions on this young lady's heart; and if that is not falling in love in a literary fashion, what is?

She missed him too when gone, more than she enjoyed his presence, till she began to find that her books were not her most cherished companions, and her brother Henry not the sum total of her human affections. His abrupt, off-hand way was to her one of his greatest charms, and his complete unconcern about anything so romantic as love, only made him ten times more noble in her eyes. Poor girl! disease had spoiled what nature had liberally bestowed, and its fair prisoner could never hope to be other than an invalid. Dalton was attracted towards Lucy: her society was very pleasant to him; if he was vexed or troubled, perplexed or annoyed, a visit to her never failed to restore his mind to its equilibrium. He often left her angry with himself for being put out with trifles, while she bore so much without one repining word.

Her presence was a sermon on patience always going on: it was more than a sermon, because it was being acted out instead of spoken. After all, words have very little effect on our actions. As a rule, people never take advice; but they always imitate prominent deeds, whether good or evil. We had better bear affliction patiently before the world, than preach a hundred homilies upon the virtue; and the effect of good and brave deeds done in the name of charity, shall live and act when the dreary preachments about it have been utterly forgotten. Last Sunday's sermon is out of your mind already, but the acted sermon still influences you, though it was done years ago.

Lucy exercised a great influence over the young surgeon; but he did not love her otherwise than as a

very dear friend. Alas, poor Lucy! it is ever so: the strong, life-devouring, soul love is generally all on one side; and it would be very curious if it were otherwise.

In these matter-of-fact times, folks have to think of half a dozen necessary things in their matrimonial affairs, before the love part of the business is thought of, for it must be confessed that expediency has proved itself often a safer match-maker than romantic love.

Lucy was woman enough to see that her love was hopeless, for she could never marry, invalid for life as she was. Difficult as it might be, the passion must be torn up by the roots, it was useless yielding to the pleasurable emotion. God had willed it otherwise. James might, and probably would, grow at last to love her; but there was little ground of hope, and the sooner she brought herself to efface the sun-lit foreground from her future, the better it would be. If she could not cease to love him, she could at least try to look on him as nothing more than a friend; but it was hard work.

And so her life went on; she took to learning a fresh language when she wanted very much to occupy her mind anew. And so, when she had told her heart the truth about Dalton, she stifled her emotions by taking up with Italian; a Grammar, Dictionary, and Reading-book were the coffin, grave, and shovel with which she buried her love.

It can be done. The will can master everything else. Think you the calm, placid faces of the cloistered monks and pale, heaven-visaged nuns hide no conquered affections and earth attractions beneath them? As certainly do they, as the summer sea hides the wrecks in its bosom of what it bore but yesterday on

its surface, when the storm is done, and the heaven-mounting billows have melted into mirror-like smoothness.

How many things they used to study together, James and Lucy! Her opinion was always so well worth taking; her views so generally turned out the right ones; and then her taste, so well cultivated, always so correct. Her society was an education to the young surgeon: she helped to form his taste, and it was modelled on her own.

The influence of an intelligent and cultivated woman over a male friend is something astonishing. Our greatest men, our brightest lights, have owed to women half their power and brightness. No influence is so powerful for good or evil alike as that of woman. She can make and unmake the sterner sex; and her acknowledged influence is a proof of her superiority. To increase in goodness is ever to become more really womanly; God created nothing half so fair and beautiful in external form and spiritual grace as woman. He made Eve, and she rushed on ruin; but he reproduced the Ideal Woman, and the sum of all created beauty is Mary, the Mother of the Divine Son.

A good woman, then, has influence unbounded in the formation of a young man's character. Lucy had influenced her brother immensely for good; and she was subduing and refining the rough, unromantic, matter-of-fact James Dalton.

CHAPTER XIII.

GOING TO COLLEGE.

It was of no use. Preaching, teaching, and doing good amongst the poor and miserable, was Henry's work, and it was more than waste of time to fight against the growing conviction any longer—it was to fight against God, he thought. To make men better, to teach them how to live, and make them fit to die; this, to Henry's mind, was more royal than to wield the sceptre, and be served by kneeling millions. To invent the steam-engine was grand and noble, to bridge the Straits and span the river with a graceful bridge, to discover countries, and fill up undiscovered lands with mountains, river-sources, and lakes, was glorious; but to save souls was grander, nobler, and more glorious still, to Henry's growing ambition.

The fact was, he was a true missionary, and as the born artist cannot help painting, or the poet lisp but in numbers, Henry could not live without doing heaven's work. Thinking much about St. Paul, he wondered why nobody tried to be like him. He often thought how grand it would be to go abroad and convert the heathen, but the idea of making the missionary's noble calling a matter of a situation in a Society, at so much per annum, did not suit his idea of St. Paul at all. Sometimes he dreamt of some day going to India or China on his own account, learning the language, and trusting God to take care of him. Then he thought this was too Quixotic and visionary a scheme to come to any good.

He often talked to Lucy about his altered aims. She could not advise him much; as yet her religious

opinions were not such as to inspire her with the idea of anything so daring as her brother's animated him to. The love of God had not fired her breast with the desire of entire self-consecration to Him. Her goodness was more of nature than of grace. Still she never checked his zeal, or tried to moderate his love of doing good; and besides she knew he would do right, be it how it would. She did think it sad he should abandon his profession, but she did not tell him so. Poor Henry was sadly perplexed. He prayed for guidance, and asked his minister to advise with him.

The minister told him that there was no doubt that what he was experiencing was a "call," and he must on no account resist it. He told him that he ought to go to college, and be regularly educated for the Baptist ministry, and gave him a note to the Principal of Bunyan College.

Henry was well acquainted with this institution by name. It was this place which supplied the Ebenezer pulpit in his early days, and which had sent it Mr. James. Strange to say he had no great reverence for the Bunyan College, though it was at the head of the list of Dissenting seminaries. Still he took the note his minister gave him to Dr. Smith, and presented himself at the awe-inspiring halls whence so many of the Salems and Ebenezers of England received their theology.

Bunyan Baptist College was situated near Kensington Park; it had lately moved from Bow, for when the denomination became respectable, and chapels began to be built in Gothic style, and came out with stained glass in addition to the chest of Whistles, and besides could boast of the accession to its ranks of one live Lord, two real Baronets, and three

Members of Parliament, it was not considered the correct thing at all to educate its pastors in the dingy East; but with increased prosperity it became advisable to imitate the rising Independent body, and throw a little more of the aristocratic element into the divinity classes. So as the latter sect had their Neology Hall in the S.W. district, the Baptists followed them, and thereby elevated the cause of Immersion in the eyes of the deacons of all the Zoars and Zions in the country. Besides, they had a new principal, and he was every inch a gentleman. Dr. Wightman was only a New York Doctor, but Dr. Smith was a London University man, and the ornament of his profession. He was such an aristocrat. Many wondered how he could be shut up all the year round manufacturing pastors, and suiting the tastes of the fastidious deacons, who sent their ill-spelled applications for supplies to the college. But though some thought it a labour of love on his part, others knew that it brought his reverence no small compensation in the way of honour and influence.

Henry was very graciously received; the doctor was a bland man, and had a sweet smile always ready for every occasion. He smiled when you introduced yourself, and he smiled when he bade you adieu; he smiled when he received money, and he smiled when he payed it away! he smiled when he preached about heaven, and he smiled when he warned reprobates of their doom. He smiled alike when he made a joke and when he spoke of death, and each was equally dreary. It was such a funny smile, just a contraction of the eyelids and an elevation of the upper lip; a skin-deep smile that never on any account grew into a laugh, not that he had not something which did duty for laughing—a slight tittering noise that came no deeper than the back of the

mouth, that was ready on every occasion where its effect would be useful.

The doctor was pleased at Henry's application, and asked him why he wished to become a minister. Satisfied with Henry's earnest manner of expressing his desire, he warned him that he would not find it a very lucrative profession, 80*l.* to 150*l.* a year was all he could expect, unless he showed superior qualifications for the work. Henry had never once thought about the money part of the matter and was not alarmed; so he received a copy of the college rules, and was bowed out by the smiling doctor. And singular rules they were, it was the examination *for getting baptized and joining the church over again*, only more respectably conducted. Henry examined them. We give them for the benefit of the reader.

RULES FOR THE ADMISSION OF STUDENTS.

I. The Candidate is required to apply to the Committee by letter, briefly stating, in his own words, the *means of his conversion, and his views of the leading articles of Christianity.*

II. It is required that he be recommended by the church to which he belongs, "as having a good moral character, and as possessed of real piety;" and that he submit to such trial of his gifts as the Committee shall think proper.

III. He is also to be recommended by two Ministers to whom he is well known, who shall certify that his natural endowments, his proficiency in knowledge and literature, and his preaching abilities, are such as to qualify him for becoming a student in the ministry.

IV. If the preliminary inquiries of the Committee are satisfactory, the applicant will be required to submit to the examination of the consulting Surgeon of the Institution.

V. If the Candidate be accepted as a probationer, the Tutors shall report concerning him at the expiration of three months or sooner; and if the Tutors report favourably, and the Committee be satisfied, he is then admitted for the remainder of four years; subject to the reception by the Committee of satisfactory reports at the end of each session.

VI. Each Student, on being admitted into the Institution, is required to *unite himself*, (*if he be not already united*) *with some Church in London or its vicinity.*

VII. Each Student engages, at the time of his admission, that during the time for which he enters, *he will not listen to the invitation of any destitute church*, or leave the Institution, without the knowledge and approbation of the Tutors and the Committee; and that while he continues in the College, he will submit to the regulations which are now, and may be hereafter established, for the preservation of order in the family.

QUERIES TO BE ANSWERED BY APPLICANTS FOR ADMISSION.

1st. As it is indispensably necessary that he who undertakes to teach Christianity should himself be a real Christian, you are desired to state what are the grounds on which you have been led to conclude you are such, together with any memorable circumstances connected with your first religious impressions, and the period of their commencement. State also, in your own words, your views of the leading truths of the Gospel.

2nd. What is your age? What has been your occupation? Are you now able to obtain a comfortable maintenance?

3rd. Have you been vaccinated? What has been the general state of your health from infancy? Will it admit of vigorous and regular application to study? What medical man can speak to the state of your health?

4th. How long have you entertained the desire of becoming a minister? Has that desire been constant or fluctuating? Did it arise in the first instance from the suggestions of others? What are the motives that now induce you to desire to enter on a course of preparatory study?

5th. What methods have you adopted, with a view to ascertain whether it be according to the will of God that you should enter on the Christian ministry?

6th. Have you been accustomed to engage in any social or public religious services—in preaching, in prayer-meetings, in the instruction of the young, in visiting the sick, in the distribution of tracts, or in any other effort for the spiritual good of others? and if so, state the particulars.

7th. Of what church are you a member? When were you admitted to its communion? Is your desire of entering the ministry approved of by your Pastor and the church? And by your parents or guardians? Give the names and addresses of the ministers who are prepared to recommend you as a student.

8th. Ascertain and state whether, in case of your admission, the church of which you are a member, or either of the churches whose pastors have recommended you, will contribute a collection, annual or otherwise, on behalf of the Institution during your residence in it?

9th. State particularly what education you have received, and what books you have read?

10th. Have you a predilection for study? Are you prepared to pursue, with unremitted diligence, the course of literary and theological study prescribed by this Institution?

11th. Have you pecuniary resources for meeting those expenses for which this Institution does not provide, such as clothes, books,[1] &c.?

12th. What portion of the expense[2] of your maintenance as a student can you or your friends undertake to defray?

"'The means of my conversion to the committee in my own words.' That is odd" thought our hero. "Why it's New Road over again! 'The means of my conversion:' is nobody converted then who does not know how it took place? 'to the committee;' do they doubt the vigilance or critical acumen of the churches then? 'in my own words;' are candidates suspected of getting up their conversion examination out of books, and do they ever resort to coaching?

"'Trial of gifts.' Will they test my voice by making me shout, or declaim 'To be, or not to be,' I wonder? 'My preaching abilities.' Why I thought I was to learn to preach there! Do they reckon my lodging-house exercises under this head? 'Listen to destitute churches.' Whatever can that mean? Do bereaved causes go about like forlorn widows, laying violent hands on the students, and exclaiming, 'You air my affinity!'

[1] From 2*l.* to 5*l.* a-year is required by the Student, for use of furniture, gas, and coals.

[2] The whole cost of board is about 40*l.*

"Then the questions—'State in *your own words* your views of the leading truths of the Gospel.' What a cribbing lot the candidates must generally be," he thought. "Views again, and in my own words. Are there no orthodox views of the Gospel that every Baptist minister must hold?

"'What books have I read?' Well I don't think they would consider the list any recommendation. I suppose some say they never read any but the Bible and the tracts they give away, and I feel sure they would not think Paley's 'Evidences,' and Butler's 'Analogy,' sufficient atonement for seven volumes of Dickens, half the 'Parlour Library,' with the 'Scalp Hunter,' Wilkie Collins, and the 'Arabian Nights.' So I shall say, 'Reading, general.'"

As he offered to pay his own expenses he had only to give his minister's recommendation, and having filled up his list of particulars, he sent in his application in due form, and anxiously awaited the result of the committee's next deliberations. It was the long vacation; he had passed all the hospital examinations satisfactorily, and he hoped that there would be no necessity for him to re-enter himself there next session.

As he was much better educated already than many who entered the college, he was told that two years would suffice to enable him to acquire Theology if he applied with industry. Desirous of being with his sister all he could, he determined to live out of the college if accepted, a resolve which the doctor commended. He had obtained sufficient knowledge of medicine to make him very useful as a medical missionary, and this he trusted one day to be.

After three weeks' waiting, an answer was received in characters that almost smiled, to the effect that Dr.

Smith congratulated our hero on the very favourable manner in which the College Council received his application, and he was informed that he might consider himself accepted.

Here then was what he had so longed for, at last come to pass. Now the way was opened to him to become a minister, a missionary, a successor of St. Paul himself if he chose; this college was to make a minister of him, here he was to be duly commissioned to teach men the way of salvation; and yet he had his doubts if that was quite the Apostolic way, but he knew no other and only wanted to do right.

However, to be a regularly constituted Dissenting minister, it had now become necessary to pass through one of their colleges, for it was beginning to force itself on a nineteenth century public, that the minister should at any rate be as well instructed as his flock; and though the older nonconformists still hold out against colleges, education, and learning as mere carnal pretences, your well-dressed congregations will have Greek and Latin, and don't mind paying a good deal extra for a degree.

So as soon as the autumn session commenced, Henry Pattison found himself commencing his theological studies at Bunyan College. It was with no small joy he found they had at last really begun, and yet a depressing sensation crept over him, as he looked round him and compared his new fellow-students with those whom he knew so well, that were just assembling in dear old St. John's; those medical students were not very religious, nor many of them over moral, but they were open-hearted, free, jolly, and good-natured, but these incipient pastors were a priggish-looking set, sanctimonious, conceited, proud,

and supercilious. There were about forty of them, and all lived in the house except Henry and three others. The house itself had formerly belonged to a nobleman, and was planned on a noble scale, and luxuriously decorated. There were magnificent paintings covering the walls and reaching from floor to ceiling, grand saloons superbly carved and gilt, stained glass, bas-relievos, broad stone staircases and gilded balustrades; delightful grounds richly planted with tall and graceful trees and beautiful shrubs, smooth lawns and well-tended parterres adorned with statuary, vases, grottoes, and conservatories combined to make Colebrook House, now *christened* (excuse the term kind Baptist readers) Bunyan College, a truly luxurious residence for the aspiring theologues.

Dr. Smith was very proud of his college, he kept up the style the more to advance the cause of his denomination, and it is undoubted that the glories of Colebrook House have had no small effect in raising the status of the ministers it has trained, in the eyes of every respectable and well-dressed deacon and deaconess, of which immersion principles in England can boast. So that when Mr. Grubbs, the deacon of Zoar chapel, Stoke Pogis, came up to town with Mrs. Grubbs, to select a "supply" for their pulpit as they would a servant from the registry office, it had a great effect upon them no doubt to enter the college grounds through a fine five-barred gate, supported on either side by griffins with lamps, and bounded on the right by an aristocratic lodge; thence to proceed up a sweeping carriage-drive kept trim and neat to the grand entrance up a flight of noble steps under a commanding portico, tremblingly to ring the bell and be answered by a solemn footman, and ushered

into an awe-inspiring waiting-room, till the smiling doctor blandly welcomed his Christian friends, and inquired into the nature of their business.

It took the breath out of Mr. Grubbs, the Zoar deacon, and made his lady wonder what the young minister would think of her parlour at the back of the Stoke Pogis shop, so odorous of chandlery and redolent of cheese, after living at Colebrook House.

Mr. Grubbs felt instinctively that any Bunyan student would object to being managed either by him, his colleagues, or their ladies. He felt it would be awkward to introduce, without getting nervous, the customary *7s. 6d.* they paid for two Sunday sermons, into the palm of the preacher's hand when wishing him good-bye, after bringing him out of such an establishment as this. Mrs. Grubbs feared they had aimed too high, and declared they had better content themselves with Mr. Boanerges' young men from the other side of the water.

Transpontine theology was very popular just then. The great Mr. Boanerges drew thousands to hear him every Sunday, for he was a talented orator and the author of a new school of Baptist theology. His preaching was a strange blending of Calvinism and Revivalism; and it is remarkable how he managed to convert so many of the British public, by impressing them with the idea that part of the human race were predestined to be lost, and part to be saved, but that those who started for heaven under his auspices and patronage were pretty sure to get there. His tabernacle was the "garden walled around" on a large scale, and he had a most astonishing way of comforting and encouraging his hearers, and making their minds happy as far as themselves were concerned, while he led them to parcel out and neatly label off

all the rest of the world into the "lost," the "reprobate," and the "ungodly."

To have a sitting at *7s. 6d.* per quarter in the front row, first gallery, at the Boanergian tabernacle was a great mark of grace and an almost certain sign of predestination, and even to frequent the aisles and sit on the flap-seats fixed on the sides of the pews, was an encouraging sign not to be despised.

Mr. Boanerges determined to set his mark on his age, and as he had succeeded in popularizing a moderated Calvinism, he resolved to perpetuate it by founding a college,—a college all to himself! a college moreover that should rival, or maybe excel, the Bunyan institution, for Bunyan had snubbed Boanerges. Boanerges was no college man; he boasted he had taught himself all he knew, which after all was not much, though he knew how to make the most of what he had.

Boanerges was vulgar, coarse, sensational, and *outré*, but, worse than all, successful beyond anything that had ever come out of Bunyan; and so Bunyan snubbed him, and as this was the last thing Boanerges could bear, he made up his mind to fight Bunyan on its own ground, spite Dr. Smith, the aristocratic and bland, and glorify himself at the same time. So he started what he called "the Pastors' Seminary." He had nearly a thousand a year from his tabernacle, besides sundry tit morsels in the way of legacies and donations from the aged dames whom he had succeeded in reviving, so that he could afford to board and lodge four or five youths as a nucleus of the Seminary, and trust to Providence and the collecting-box for the rest. Whatever business ability and shrewdness of judgment the reverend gentleman might have had, he certainly did not manifest it in the

selection of his pupils, for never was man more miserably duped in this direction than he. Looking after the *sine qua non* of boldness and assurance, he often got with the qualifications several others he did not bargain for. Good-natured and unsuspecting, he was sadly duped by the designing yet "gracious" young gentlemen, who aimed at revolving round the successful Boanerges, and shining with the light they could borrow from him.

Here was a fine chance for a godly young bricklayer, with a good voice and talent for public oratory! Here was a chance for a sanctified farmer-lad with a taste for elocution! He had only to enlist under the banner of Boanerges, part his hair in the middle, wear it long behind, draw down the corners of his mouth when preaching, give his voice an unctuous roll, and announce himself to little Bethel as ambassador from the court of Boanerges, to ensure an amount of popularity he never could have hoped for under other circumstances.

All the Boanergian apostles were youthful; the younger the better, provided they could preach well. It was a sight to comfort any congregation to see the pulpit occupied (filled we were going to say) by a young gentleman in a nice suit of black from Moses and Son's, with exuberant white tie, and preaching unctuously from Solomon's Song; especially when one reflected that scarce three months had elapsed since the young divine had been shouting on a penny steamer, responsive to the captain's signs, "Ease her!" "Turn her!" "Stop her!" or engaged in some of the other less ambitious walks of life, wherein his former lot was cast.

Boanerges was bothered sadly with his theological boys. Some got married to vulgar females, and thereby

lowered themselves; others ought to have got married to ditto, and didn't. Some went in for extensive libraries of old puritanical books, and didn't pay for them, admiring Baptist booksellers being ever ready to give them credit. Others were caught preaching what turned out to be heresy, and thereby subjected themselves to the penalties of the Boanergian inquisition; some got into hot water with the other ministers of the places where they were located. And all this tended to bring the Pastors' Seminary into disrepute, till at last good Baptist people got to say they loved Boanerges, but hated his satellites.

When they wanted money, which they always did, the pastor lent it them; when they were hungry, which not seldom happened, he had them to his mansion for a feed; and, in return, when he wanted public laudation—which was very frequently—they were ever ready to extol their beloved pastor, so that he had always a host of trumpeters to sound his praises, men who on their own account would have been utterly powerless, but who, under his auspices were respectfully listened to by their sect.

The Boanerges men detested the Bunyan men because the latter were educated, more refined and influential than themselves; and the Bunyan men had a most supreme contempt for the others, on account of their conceit, ignorance, and repulsive form of piety.

At the time we write of, the aristocratic chapels in the larger towns used to patronize Colebrook House when they dealt in divinity, and the less pretentious village meeting-houses had to content themselves with the cheaper and more suitable Surrey-side theology.

Boanerges kept his students in a very humble style of

living, and the Bunyan men lived in grand style, as became their more exalted theology; so that here, as elsewhere in England, there was a nice, respectable, well-to-do, refined religion for the rich, and a vulgar, coarse, sensual, upstart one for the poor. You could not get a decent Bunyan man to preach for you under at least 20*s.* per Sunday and his travelling expenses, and perhaps 10*s.* extra if he had a degree; but then you got a transcendental and refined gospel for your money: whereas, if you had sent over the water, though it would have been vastly cheaper, it would have been a ranting, roaring, brimstone-and-blue-flame kind of teaching that might have frightened you out of your wits. So that, as the deacon's wife in a former chapter observed, "If you want good preaching, like everything else you must pay well for it."

Alas! poor working men and women of England, how is it you will not go and be preached to? Here is a theology all to yourselves, like the chapels in America for the blacks, waiting for you, and you prefer sitting at home reading, or walking in the country, to being Boanergized by deputy! Well, *de gustibus non disputandum!*

Henry, then, found himself in the midst of an eminently respectable set of men—men who would have scorned to have been seen delivering tracts, or open-air addresses, or running the risk of contagion in dirty courts and houses, or doing anything in fact but preaching in a properly-constructed pulpit, in a duly recognized chapel, with regular pews and accessories complete, for a stipulated sum of current coin of the realm. "The labourer is worthy of his hire," was a passage of Scripture *very precious* to them.

"Why don't we try and reach the masses?" said some of the students to our hero, in answer to him,

soon after his entry. "We aim at drawing up the masses to our level, not descending to theirs!"

Henry replied, "If the Saviour had thought thus, we should have had to get up to heaven to learn how to be saved!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BUNYAN STUDENTS.

HENRY had been some six months at Colebrook House when a fellow-student, who had passed three years there, one day poked him under the ribs, and, in a knowing manner, said, "Harry, my boy, some of the romance is worn off your idea of college life, isn't it? I fancy you don't find it exactly what you expected. Is not that so?"

"I grieve to be obliged to say you have exactly expressed my feelings in the matter. I am disappointed—nay, I am astounded—at the difference between my view of college from the out and the inside. Not that I have any special reason to complain; it will answer my purpose well enough. I am not likely to become tainted with German Theology or Unitarianism; but it grieves me to see all our best men, our third and fourth year men, our graduates of the university, so rapidly losing their faith in revelation, sneering at the religion of their fathers and mothers, greedily embracing the teaching of the last sceptic who has been able to put his infidelity in the attractive and seducing modern form, and making the holy work of the ministry nothing more

important than a respectable literary way of getting their living."

Henry had grown warm ere he had finished, and he expressed himself, as was his wont, more plainly than he at first intended.

His companion laughed heartily at his vehemence, and replied, "It is always so with you freshmen. You come to college with your heads full of romance that soon gets dispelled. You are prepared to meet a set of apostles, and you find yourself in company with a lot of jolly, clever, nineteenth century young men, who dare to think for themselves, and cast off the leading-strings of their mental infancy; and then you get into a state of holy indignation, till, after a year or two, you find your old Puritanism is behind the age; and, as your mind expands, you too begin to think for yourselves, till, at your third year, if you are anything but a Puritanical drone, you end by companioning with the splendid minds of the men whom you recently despised (vain ignoramus!) as infidels, and start on the grand voyage of discovery to the unknown seas of truth, that ever stretch illimitably beyond you."

"Yes, and make shipwreck of my faith."

"Bah! what is faith? what do you mean by the term? Faith, I am beginning to think, is simply credulity; the longer I live the more I learn, and the more I learn the more I doubt! To be ignorant is to have plenty to believe, to be learned is to have everything to doubt; till at last with Socrates you come to say 'I know nothing, what do you know?'"

"But this is very dreadful. If we are to come to this, why are we here?"

"Here! Because a parcel of innocent old women

subscribe to extend the Gospel by means of an educated ministry!"

"And a pretty Gospel they will get for their money, when the elder students of this place get scattered about."

"Oh, they will settle down all right: the fact is, Pattison, heterodoxy is all very well at college, but it don't pay when you come to settle. So our men turn out orthodox enough at last, though it is only because the congregations would soon stop supplies if they were not considered sound."

"But they must become confirmed hypocrites?"

"Oh dear no, they still preach as they believe, only in a more guarded way, because a fellow must live, and to some extent people ought to have what they pay for."

"Then you mean to say they gradually instil Neological ideas into their hearers' minds, under a pretence of orthodoxy?"

"Oh, for the matter of that, ninety-nine people out of a hundred don't know what heterodoxy or orthodoxy are, even according to their own systems, so they can't complain."

"Under some circumstances you would call this Jesuitism, and be the first to expose and denounce their method of action."

"Oh, the cases are totally different; the Jesuits labour to bring men under the thraldom of priestcraft, *we* to rid them of it, for after all three parts of your beloved orthodoxy is nothing but old Popery disguised."

"Then we had better have kept Popery I am thinking, than set out on a road that can lead only to downright infidelity."

"Don't use strong expressions or rude, ugly words,

you betray your freshmanship by such terms. We call Turks infidels, and it is only priests and old women who would apply such a term to our brethren, who may differ from us in a few minor points of scholastic theology."

"Minor points do you call them! Denying the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, the doctrine of the Atonement or the Inspiration of the Bible. Minor points, indeed!" cried Henry, getting warm, "I should like to know what are your major!"

"Now, my dear fellow, don't excite yourself, or quarrel with the tendencies of an enlightened age. All those things you learned from your mother and your nurse, and haven't the slightest idea why you believe them; they may be true, but you don't know that they are. Don't look frightened, or as if you expected the ceiling to fall on me for my profanity, it will be time enough for you to fulminate like a baited pope when you have studied all these matters; meanwhile be modest, learn to think for yourself, 'learn to unlearn' as the spirit of the desert said to Contarini Fleming, cast off early prejudices gotten you don't know how, and be very respectful to your neighbour's doubts."

Henry went to his room, for the first time wondering whether, perhaps after all, there was not something to be said for his opponent's side of the question.

He certainly cut a very poor figure whenever he attempted to argue with the third or fourth year's men; moreover, he found that nearly all the men of any brains in the college were freethinkers, and it was only the freshmen who held to the orthodox Calvinism of their infancy, which they seemed to outgrow with every week of study and intellectual intercourse, and which seldom lived over their second year at Bunyan.

During the first six months of his career as a theological student, he had been daily discovering his own ignorance; much that he had hitherto held was going from him, because he saw that he had no foundation for his belief, and he had little reason to suppose that he had not much more to unlearn, ere he began to acquire fresh articles of belief.

His friend's words struck him with all the more force, that he felt their truth. He could not deny that he only held the grandest doctrines of his faith because his mother and nurse had taught him them, though at first his mind rebelled against the assertion, he could not rid himself of the impression it made upon him, and he wondered what was to save him from the common scepticism.

A few days after the above conversation, he had a visit at his lodging from one of the elder men, who was in his last year; he went straight to the bookshelves, as most students do, looked over his library, and exclaimed:—"Why, Harry my boy, what a fusty lot of old fogies you have on your shelves! awfully good, but dreadfully mild, I must say; Matthew Henry, Scott, Howe, Baxter, Bunyan, Owen, and the rest of the milk-and-water school. I weeded my shelves of all that twaddle some time since."

"Why?"

"Worn out, my dear lad, worn out long ago—relics of a by-gone age, like the fossils in a museum—no thought, man alive—infant's food! skye-blue! pap! and so you'll say when you come to read F. W. Robertson, F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Dewey, Channing, and Theodore Parker. Ah, my lad, they will make you think, brace your intellectual muscles, lift your mind from grovelling amidst monkish dogmas and dreary platitudes,

and make you a man fit to lead nineteenth century minds.

"Do you think the age that has produced the steam-engine, annihilated space with the telegraph, and revolutionized society by scientific invention, will submit to imbibe the water-gruel that sufficed for our grandmothers? If you feed your mind with that stuff much longer you'll only be fit for a Church curate in a quiet suburb. I would be ashamed to cheat a deserving butterman or a worthy trunk-maker of his lawful prey any longer, and if I were you I would sell them all off at per pound at once. But seriously, Pattison, at your age, for you are no longer a meek Sunday-school teacher, I would advise you to get out of leading-strings."

"Must I have no settled faith, no creed, then? but submit myself to the teaching of any upstart theologian who claims to direct me?"

"Settled faith! creed! mere relics of Popery, dear boy; relics of Popery. *Quot homines, tot sententiæ.* It is as good in religion as in anything else. You cannot bind the surging waves of human thought with the fetters of creeds, any more than you can chain down the restless ocean with a cable. Creeds are human, and the intellect is enslaved that submits to be bound by them. Get above creeds. Submit to nothing in the way of theology but what you have reasoned out for yourself!"

Poor Henry, it was the same with all the clever men here. There were some indeed who shook their heads at them, and called them heretics; but, unfortunately, they were for the most part either the unsuccessful and the dull, or the innocent freshmen straight from their mother's knee; there were some sound thinkers amongst the young men, Henry thought, but their conduct did not commend their doctrine.

There was George Wallace, a witty, clever, fluent speaker, the admiration and delight of all the fashionable chapels where he preached (for the students were sent out to preach during their sessions at Bunyan). Oh, he would discourse you sweetly by the hour, and pray such exquisitely worded extempore prayers, as would make you rush into the vestry after service to thank him for. But then he would curse the doctor behind his back, cheat the professors in class with cribs, borrow money and never repay it, run into debt wherever he could get credit, get tipsy, gamble, and talk profanely, till he convinced you that his preaching was one thing and his conduct quite another. Yet he was very orthodox. Then there was Richard Graffon, he too was another "sweet preacher," as the old ladies said; he would "dwell" to any extent on "precious portions of Scripture," and be quite incapable of freethinking, either good or bad, for he always preached other men's thoughts and palmed them off as his own, would tell lies, act dishonestly, brag, and deceive his tutors, and then laugh at his power of gulling the Baptist public with pious ministrations. But none equalled in popularity amongst the most sober-minded and pious of the sect the brilliant and talented Charles Duval. His pulpit oratory was of a very high order; his earnestness, zeal, and passionate pleading of God's cause before the people, would have led them to think, as indeed it did, that he was holy even to asceticism, and devoted to religion almost to excess; yet he was, what at last he turned out to be before the world, a man of the very worst character, licentious, inebriate, spendthrift, luxurious, and cruel.

Dr. Smith and his professors were amiable and good Christian gentlemen, and, of course, these men were

expelled when their conduct became known. Yet they could not but deplore the loss of such champions of orthodoxy.

The sceptical and freethinking party were not only clever, gentlemanly, and well-read, but they were generally speaking of irreproachable character, and if ever there was a scandal brought on the place by a student, it was pretty certain to be through an Evangelical or Calvinistic wolf in sheep's clothing.

All the new students brought a most orthodox set of books with them, mostly the theological works of the Robert Hall school of Dissent, or the Romaine school of the Church of England, but their first year had scarcely passed ere they were replaced, or eclipsed, by the Broad Church or Unitarian books that occupied "the line" on every book-case in the college.

Henry soon became no exception to the rule, for they were gradually laughing him out of his Puritanism. There was something very fascinating to these young men in dabbling with infidelity. Forbidden fruit has ever a lusciousness that fails not to attract the young and curious; but though they well knew their favourite authors were not the ones their tutors expected them to study, this must be said for them—they were never warned of the danger they incurred by giving themselves up to indiscriminate reading. There are those who are ever ready to embrace a new and startling theory, simply because it is singular and contrary to the received opinion of their superiors. It is certain that there are multitudes of young men and women now-a-days, who are ready to take up with anything that is peculiar and heterodox in religion, and if needs be to suffer persecution in defence of their newfangledness. Pride has ever been, and will continue to be to the end of time, the fruitful parent of innumerable heresies.

Were it not for this deadly sin, there would be none of those religious dissensions and theological wranglings that wound the Saviour in the house of his friends. One fold would embrace, and one Shepherd tend, the whole Christian family, whereas this first-born child of Hell has set brother against brother, and made the Christian family the prey of every evil passion.

Pride has brought about every separation from the faith established by Christ and His Apostles, and pride continues to this day as productive of religious differences as in the ages of the early heresies; these heresies, like untimely fruit, drop off and perish one by one, only, however, to manure the ground that produces an ever-recurring crop from this "root of bitterness."

It could scarcely be otherwise in this sinful world. "By this sin the angels fell," and by this sin they ever seek the ruin of the human race; especially are the young, to whom their "little learning" is only too dangerous, liable to be betrayed into misbelief by the natural conceit common to their years. To differ from their tutors on the most vital subjects, and take up with new principles because they are advocated by certain ambitious and daring thinkers, is a temptation few clever young men can resist; they learned what religion they had from their fathers and mothers, and their highest authorities were perhaps illiterate and self-constituted ministers or teachers. In after-life their reading and study make them view with little respect the antiquated theology in which they discover so many imperfections that they, in accordance with the spirit of the age, look about them for a more intellectual and "advanced" school of thought. There is nothing really to hinder them from thinking this course *imperative* on them as conscientious and

thoughtful men. They have no settled creed, their teachers differ among themselves as to what is orthodoxy and what is not; without dogma or articles of faith, they are like a vineyard without a hedge; it would be strange if Satan neglected to rob them of the shreds of Christianity left to them. Pride whispers, "Be original, be singular, be untrammelled!" And their own consciences, when interrogated, reply, "Why not?" Who can blame them? They are at least as much at liberty to make their own religion for themselves as the fathers of your particular sect, whether Luther, Calvin, Knox, Cranmer, Owen, or Bunyan, were to make one for you; and you have no more right on your own principles to blame the young men, than you have to blame the "reformers" to whom you owe your religious existence. Indeed, they would be acting contrary to the express principles you had inculcated in them from their infancy, if they received any portion of their belief on Authority, or submitted to any dogma or article of religion they had not framed for themselves.

Under these circumstances, then, Dr. Smith acted consistently when he went into his students' rooms, and, glancing at their books, pretended not to notice the heretical works they so much affected. How could he take them to task? Where is our creed? they would have demanded. To what are we bound? they would have inquired. Had he replied, The Bible is our rule of faith; they would have declared it was equally theirs, and deprecated any idea of acting contrary to it. But he was too wise to do anything of the kind, as he saw such an argument would have been as illogical as ineffectual. So he winked at their proceedings, and left their theological education in the hands of the master spirits of the college,

whom all the rest were certain to imitate and be governed by. His own divinity classes were attended, but were the contempt of the house. They had refused to be dogmatized to by the lights of the denomination and the fathers of the sect, they were not going to accept a creed ready-made on the premises from the Principal of the College. They thought they could beat him at creed-making, and have the credit of the production.

The worst feature about these young men was that they were "trimmers," that is, they cut down their creed to suit the views of any congregation they had to minister to,—though, as their belief was already reduced to a minimum, perhaps the term was in their case scarcely applicable. They dealt in negations largely, as might be expected from their admiration for German theology; many of them learned German for the sake of its theological literature.

They affected poetry considerably, for it helped them to clothe their ideas in pretty language, which was very important to them, as they had to get their living purely by their preaching.

Preaching was all their aim; they voted the devotional part of the services a terrible bore, and sadly deplored the unwillingness of the congregations to put up with a Liturgy; it was the sermon they were paid for, it was the sermon the people had come to hear; still they must throw in two extempore prayers in each service, one of five minutes and the other from fifteen to twenty minutes in duration. The opening prayer was a short matter and easily got over; but the long prayer, which had to include everything the congregation was considered either to want or to be thinking about, was no easy task. They could not do as the Boanerges men did, roam from Dan to Beer-

sheba in their prayers, picking up anything that came in their way to tell the Almighty about, or start on a vague praying expedition of half an hour expecting, like Mr. Micawber, for "something to turn up." They could not preach to God or give him a summary of the week's news after a series of "Thou knowest, Lord," as some preachers did when they wanted to express their opinion on the events of the day. This would have been an insult to the Supreme Being, to whom they were at least respectful and reverent. No; they had to compose a real essay, and clothe it in Scriptural language, with a slight dash of the Book of Common Prayer about it, and with as much of the devotional element as their arctic souls were capable of.

Now this devotional essay was no easy thing to extemporize; and as they were expected to pray with their eyes shut, or open only towards the ceiling, as if looking to see that their weak petitions struggled through it, they could not make use of notes, as they did in their sermons, and were continually on thorns lest their ill-arranged or hastily-worded prayers should spoil the effect of them. One young divine declared the nervous state he got into when hatching his public prayers always interfered with his H's, especially if he got excited. So they all deplored the want of a prayer-book, but the congregations would not hear of any such thing.

Praying in public is the dissenting layman's safety valve; it is the readiest way he has of letting his brethren know his opinion on any matter; here he can lash the minister's faults or negligences, or gently touch him up on any of his weak points, or metaphorically pat him on the back if he has been good; he can scold his neighbours, or abuse his enemies, or

let off any superabundant piety in which he may have been indulging; so that it is utterly unlikely Dissent will come to pray by book. The Broad Church Bunyan men detested this sort of thing, and deplored it as a blot on their otherwise perfect system.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BUNYAN TEACHING.

THIS is the age of improvement, development, change. Fifty years ago everything was more steady-going and settled than now. Of all things that have changed, developed, or broken up and re-appeared in another form, what are known as Nonconforming principles in England have suffered most.

The Dissenters of to-day would not be recognized by their ancestors; and though the old doctrines still live in back streets and villages, and flourish in dingy Salems and Zions, their modern opponents of the New School are rapidly cutting them out, and the intelligent modern Dissenter does not recognize the legitimate descendants of the "old faith," that arose in the seventeenth century.

The Catholic is proud of his religious ancestry, and boasts of the long line of the Fathers who have handed down his faith. Your modern Dissenter would be offended if you connected him with the Puritans, and disclaims all connexion with Praise-God-Barebones, or Obadiah Bind-their-kings-in-chains-and-their-nobles-in-links-of-iron. He professes to believe that the Reformation was the work of God; that till it took place

Satan had held all Christendom in his cruel thrall for at least twelve centuries; and that the darkness of those long ages was only dispelled by the dawn of truth, of which Luther, Calvin, and the rest, were the favoured heralds. He professes that these men were God's messengers, to awaken Christendom to the Gospel they had so long been blind to; Calvin especially they owe respect to, for he it was who erected the five pillars on which their system is built (see page 8). And yet, your fashionable modern Dissenter stamps as the most terrible heresy, and spares no pains to warn the world against those very principles, those very axioms laid down by the men who, they will tell you, were the divinely appointed apostles of the glorious work of the Reformation. You shall hear a dozen times a year, in every town where there is a Dissenting chapel, the principles of the seventeenth century Dissenters denounced and branded as antagonistic to Holy Scripture.

It is evident, then, to a reflecting mind, that either the principles of the Reformers were wrong, and, consequently, they were not God's apostles of truth; or, on the contrary, that the modern descendants of the Reformation have forsaken the old paths, and are wandering from the faith revealed in the fifteenth century.

Bunyan College was a striking example of this religious transition. The institution, founded some sixty years back for the education of young men for the ministry, was established on a strictly Calvinistic basis. Its foundations were laid on the "Five Points," and its doors were barred against Arminianism of every shade. And now, Calvinism has no more vigorous opponents than the majority of the Bunyan students. No institution could more completely defeat the intentions of its founders than this Baptist College, and all in half a century! Not Oxford, with its founda-

tions laid by pious benefactors for Catholic purposes, more thoroughly departs from their intentions, than does this place.

When our hero entered he was very partial to a moderated Calvinistic teaching; and, hearing that if the principles of the institution were not in accordance with his own, they ought to have been, he did not pretend to disguise them. Now, Dr. Smith secretly detested Calvinism; he thought it obstinate, irrational, and worse—vulgar! Therefore he threw cold water on it wherever he saw it breaking out. Nevertheless, there was a "phase of Calvinism" with which he could agree, to use his favourite expression; and it was really difficult to discover in what system of religion he could not see a "phase of truth." But this was his character; the bump of caution in his head would have delighted any phrenological specimen hunter. He never jumped at conclusions; he weighed everything carefully, and believed nothing that did not absolutely force itself upon him with mathematical precision.

His theological classes were indeed a curiosity. He taught divinity without first principles or dogma! If he had any fixed belief himself, it was difficult to define it; it is probable he could not have done so to the satisfaction of anybody. It is at any rate certain he could impart no fixed belief to his pupils. If they had not settled their creed before coming to college, it is certain they would have no creed to settle when they left it.

The students, then, were set deliberately to make up their system of religious belief from the works of all the arch-heretics they could lay their hands upon; and if their Christianity survived the effort, the motley creed their teachers had imparted them would be the

truth of God, with which they were to go forth to the world in the name of Him who bade the Apostles—"Go! teach all nations." Waging war against that Church which comes down to us from the Pentecostal outpouring, they were to exhibit to the world a standard composed of a patchwork, collected from the vanquished ensigns of the enemies of the Bride of Christ.

Neglecting the ever widening river that, proceeding from beneath the throne of God, has rolled through the pages of history, fertilizing the deserts through which it passed, and refreshing all who have sought its healing waters, they were to seek out the polluted ponds and stagnant pools, make a mixture of their noxious waters, strain off the most offensive matter, and drink the draught that could only empoison their souls and work their death!

Let us make a few extracts from Henry's notes of a course of lectures by Dr. Smith on Salvation.[1] He tones down Socinianism, and exhibits it to his class as a pretty but slightly defective system; showing his students how far they could safely adopt it, and where it became dangerous, rather seeking out something to praise in it, than condemning a system so opposed to the principles he was supposed to advocate.

After showing how Socinus and his school make "all God's attributes to be mere modifications of benevolence, that God hates sin only because it makes men miserable, forbidding sin to deter men from doing what is hurtful to themselves, and punish-

[1] The whole of the following notes were copied verbatim from the lectures of an eminent Dissenting theologian, by one of his students. They have never before been published, and are a fair specimen of the manner in which Dissenting ministers acquire their theology.

ing it that men may learn from experience to avoid it; that transgression is a debt due to God which He is free to cancel at any time, and on any ground; that Christ does nothing to procure our pardon, which is the effect of Divine goodness alone, only delivering to us the message of pardon, confirming His message by miracles and setting forth the truth in clear and impressive forms, dying a martyr to the truth He came to reveal, and rising again to complete the proof of His Divine mission and to be an earnest of our own resurrection," he winds up with—"This system is partial truth; but there are important truths that have no place here, and the system is so far defective, and has therefore small claims to our belief."

He exhibits another theory that "denies the doctrines of Substitution, of Sacrifice, and of Satisfaction in any strict sense, as well as the Divinity of our Blessed Lord; that makes our forgiveness to be the reward of Christ's obedience, though strictly His obedience or suffering is no satisfactory, adequate return for human transgression; that the Satisfaction of the Cross is not properly sufficient for the sins of the world, but is accepted by God as if it were." He closes this explanation of Arianism by the remark, "This theory again is partial truth. It admits the Divine holiness, honours Our Lord's benevolence, and maintains the immutability of the Divine law. On the other hand it makes the Divinity of Christ unnecessary, disowns His infinite merit, makes the punishment of one of our race an equivalent for the punishment due to all, and it leaves unexplained all the passages of Scripture that speak of God laying on Him the iniquity of us all, and of His 'bearing our sins in His own body on the tree.'

"Forgiveness indeed is through suffering. But the

suffering has no other efficacy than our own, and as it is the suffering of one man for millions, it cannot be regarded as commensurate with the requirements of the Divine law. The following modifications of this theory, and of the preceding, deserve special notice. *Rationalistic* interpreters of Scripture finding that among all nations some sins have been held to be in their own nature unpardonable; that an avenging Nemesis needed to be satisfied, and that this satisfaction was often obtained from the innocent; finding, moreover, that this notion seems sanctioned by the ancient law of sacrifices, vicarious and expiatory,—hold one or other of the preceding theories, and explain all the expressions that are not explained by them on the principle of accommodation. These ideas of vicarious suffering, they say, had struck their roots so deeply into the minds of men that all the New Testament writers, St. James excepted, attribute undoubtedly a vicarious character to Our Lord's sufferings. They intermixed in their writings the language of the Old Testament, and so convert the ignominious death of the founder of the Christian religion into an argument for its truth." (See De Wette on "Expiatory Death of Jesus Christ.") "Our Lord's purpose was not very different; at first He shrank from death, prayed that He might be delivered from it, but at last, foreseeing in the exercise of profound sagacity that His career was likely to have a disastrous end, He resolved to make that end an evidence of His sincerity and the means of superseding the sacrificial rites of all nations. This theory condemns itself. The statement of it is a sufficient refutation." (See for other specimens of rationalistic teachers, Smith's "First Lines of Theology," page 519. Some of the writers are anti-supernaturalists.)

"Equally, or more unsatisfactory still is a theory

which I place here though, perhaps, it belongs properly to a place by itself. I refer to the mythical theory of Strauss. This system regards the whole gospel as either mythical or legendary. The first with no historical basis at all, but setting forth ideas in a poetical form; the second associating these ideas with persons who had historical existence though there is no ground for associating the ideas with them. The narratives of the gospels are, in this light, man's own tendencies and thoughts projected into facts. Jesus is an historical person, but what is said of Him really befell no individual, though it is true of the race. The union of spirit and matter in man is the incarnation. The conquests of mind over matter are the true miracles. The gradual modification of the gross material life, and its gradual reassumption of a divine spiritual form as civilization advances, is set forth in the death and resurrection and the ascension ascribed to an individual. In this theory the Sacrifice of the Cross is the self-sacrifice of the flesh. The most acceptable punishment is always self-inflicted; atonement is offered in the person of the sinner. Substitution and a personal Saviour are things entirely repudiated; as Milton puts it:—

'Man self-raised regains his native seat.'

"Once more, to state this theory is a sufficient refutation, nor has even Pantheism entirely passed over the story of the Atonement, though, as may be supposed, its theory is peculiar. Its chief teacher is Hegel. According to him, the life of God is known to us in three forms:—1st, as pure spirit prior to creation. 2nd, as unfolding himself in the creation of the universe and of finite mind. 3rd, in the return or the recall of the creation into the infinite spirit. As God in His progress from the centre outward,

reaches His lowest degradation in sin and death, so it is there the Divine needs to reappear that men may see how possible it is to return from sin and death unto God. The work of the Holy Spirit is carried on in men's hearts, meanwhile. The Father, therefore, is the creating and infinite spirit; the Son is the infinite spirit allying Himself with the finite, proving by a loving example the possibility of this alliance even in death; while by the Holy Spirit, men are brought into a living consciousness of the reality of this union. This scheme excludes, of course, divine righteousness and divine love. Man is in fact the supposed necessary development of God himself. An independent human will, grace, punishment in any true sense, have no place in the theory at all.

"I put last in the middle system the theory of Schleiermacher, as it approaches more nearly than the others to the usual orthodox view. He starts by affirming the unity of Christ and the race. The central truth of this system is the incarnation, God with man, while by the Spirit all that is needed on our part to complete this unity is supplied. Through the first, Christ is one with us, and through the second, we are one with Him. This unity begins with the birth of Our Lord, and is strengthened by every act and lesson of His life, and is consummated in His death. In that death the self-surrender of Christ as incarnate, and of the race in Him, is perfected, and therein consists the sufficiency of His sacrifice. Substitution it is not, in any proper sense, it is rather the deifying of the body in the person of its head; while the efficacy of His work depends not on the penalty or suffering He incurred, but on the self-denial, the submission of the will of Our Lord to the will of the Father. In a word, he denies the Sacrifice of the

Cross, in the common meaning of these terms, and he holds that our unity with Christ depends not on our faith but simply on His incarnation (very like that hyper-Calvinism which holds our justification before we believe—when, in fact, Christ died).

"Here again we have much truth.

"Christ's submissiveness was part of His obedience. It was essential to His sufferings, and to the acceptableness of His sacrifice. Our union with Christ is one of the great truths of Scripture. We are crucified together; we rise with Him; we are hereafter to share His glory. But this union is by faith, or sometimes by baptism, the outward symbol of faith (see Rom. vi.). The theory, moreover, leaves out of view the fact which renders submission acceptable—namely, that the sufferings inflicted are inflicted righteously by the law, and that these sufferings are ever spoken of as the bearing of our sins. In short, self-sacrifice is not the only sacrifice of which Scripture speaks; and of this last the theory of Schleiermacher takes no account.

"It will be noticed that the views of Maurice, which represent the satisfactoriness of Our Lord's works, as depending essentially upon the filial spirit He displayed, are a slight modification of Schleiermacher's system. He strenuously denies that Our Lord's death was necessary on the ground of justice, and attaches somewhat less importance than Schleiermacher to the unity of the race with Christ.

"These theories are all of them erroneous through defect; they fail chiefly in maintaining that they represent the entire truth, and so in denying parts of the truth, sometimes more important than the parts they maintain. It is as if each student of Scripture had found the system too large for his grasp, and so had contracted its proportions till it was within the

compass of his powers. These differences on the doctrine of the work of Christ arise really from the diversity of its claims (as in discussions on the nature of virtue); and the true measure of these claims is to be ascertained, not by denying these theories entirely but by combining them. Each party, in fact, has selected but one of the qualities of Our Lord's work; and in his anxiety to exalt *it* has dishonoured, or even denounced the rest. Our wisdom is, to recognize all and to honour all."[2]

When ecclesiastical history was attempted to be taught at Bunyan on this system, it was not surprising the doctor should commend the writer, George Arnold, who, he declares, "instead of looking to the history of Christianity in the prevailing Church (the Catholic) regarded the various religious sects as the channels of religious progress." Dr. Smith said, "This was a principle of great importance with

[2] The faint praise with which the doctor condemned these abominable systems, operated as suggestions of heresy to the students. Of course, there is a certain sense in which, as Archbishop Manning somewhere remarks, all the heresies may be considered as "chippings from the Great Rock of Truth—the Catholic faith;" but the effect on these young men, who were thus taught to look kindly on a class of teaching that was most clearly opposed to that of the Holy Scriptures, because it happened, here and there, to contain something that was not wholly bad, was simply to make them act the part of the man with the muck-rake in the "Pilgrim's Progress," who was for ever raking amongst the dirt and rubbish for imaginary treasure, while he neglected the jewelled crown the angel held overhead. The fact was that, hearing there was something good in these dangerous works, they instantly possessed themselves of them, and generally ended by imbibing the worse as well as the better parts of their teaching. Young and ill-trained minds are ever ready to go to extremes; and these pupils generally ventured much farther than their tutor expected, when he started them on their perilous voyage of discovery.

relation to the middle ages," because it gave favourable account of the rise of Protestantism; but acknowledged it to be "very liable to abuse with regard to the early Church." The early heresies had been dead and buried so long that the doctor could afford to anathematize them; but the more modern ones, though scarcely less dangerous, must be exalted and praised because they were his only refuge from "the prevailing Church."

It was thus the young men were trained to become leaders of other men; they were taught to look upon the Apostolic denunciations of heresy as superfluous. St. Paul had said, "From heretics withdraw thyself." Dr. Smith said, on the contrary, "Associate with them, and get all the less outrageous portion of their creed together, and having made yourself a coat like Joseph's of many colours, adorn yourselves in the motley that becomes so well the course we are pursuing.

It would seem the doctor was never so happy as when he could denounce Popery, or find something to praise in the most flagrant of the heresies the Church has condemned. But he abused the Catholic Church in public and from the house-top; he fondled his beloved heresies and dangerous tampering with infidelity in secret, lest the world should suspect his orthodoxy.

When lecturing to the divinity class on the extent and duration of future punishment, his cautious way of hinting heterodoxy may be exemplified by the following quotation:—

"I may here say what I should not care to say everywhere, that if after thousands of years I were told that all sinners and all sin had ceased out of God's universe, by ceasing to be, I could not affirm

that God had deceived me: because it is just possible that the expressions used in Scripture to denote the duration of hell may be figurative."

It could scarcely be wondered at if many of the students, ever ready to go beyond their more cautious tutor, began openly to express their disbelief in the eternity of future punishment. Dr. Smith well knew that several of his students were professed rationalists. He did not break his heart over the fact. Only when sending them out to preach at orthodox chapels, he took care to warn them to keep their peculiarities in abeyance, and preach so as to suit the hearers, advice that they were generally speaking quite willing to follow.

When Henry heard his fellow-students for the first time expressing their scepticism in class, he was simply horrified, and did not disguise his abhorrence of it. But when he constantly heard the doctor admitting that "more or less" "with certain restrictions" there was a "phase of truth" in their view, he began to despair. He soon began to see that the Socinianism and Arianism of his fellow-students was more tenderly dealt with by the doctor than his own Calvinism was; and he clung to his old principles with the terror of one who sees men all around him sinking into the depths of infidelity. But at last he began to doubt, and the first doubt was admitted through pride; he did not want to be set down as narrow-minded and exclusive, so he tried his pinions for a flight to the more ethereal regions of free thought.

CHAPTER XVI.

HATCHLEY COLNE.

As we have before intimated, the students were sent out to preach for any Baptist chapel in any part of the country which might think proper to apply for their services and pay for them. A great many places availed themselves of this arrangement when by any cause they were without their regular minister.

The more important chapels, of course, got the most important students, and the little country Zions and Salems had to put up with the younger ones. As there was no regular sum for a Sunday's work, the chapels fixed their own price; and terrible were the heartburnings and jealousies caused amongst these truly Apostolic gentlemen by the inequality of the rewards for their ministerial exertions. The preaching arrangements were never announced till the Saturday at noon, and the doctor endeavoured, as far as possible, to let all have their turn at the "good" places, as the lucrative pulpits were designated. When the arrangements were fixed, and the young men were free to collect their thoughts and devote their attention to the serious work they had undertaken, they generally met together in the common hall to compare notes and see who had got the best chance of netting the weekly pay. It was truly an edifying spectacle on a fine Saturday morning to see some score of young men, the professed successors of that St. Paul who gloried in tribulation, distress, poverty, journeyings, hunger, and cold for his Master's service, wrangling and quarrelling over the pay they were to have for preaching the Gospel to the flock!

"So, Green, I understand the doctor sends you to Brighton to-day, a two-guinea place, and here I am before you on the list and have had nothing but a wretched guinea 'vic'" (the term they gave the Sunday service) "these three weeks. I call it downright dishonesty, and shall go in and demand an explanation," and off he goes to the doctor's study.

Here is a fine young fellow who has received a pressing invitation to go to the place he went last Sunday, where the deacons tell him he was very "acceptable" and useful. He has also been requested by the doctor to go to Mashton. Now the former place is very poor and can only pay 10*s.* for the services of a student, whereas the latter place offers 15*s.* The expenses at either are only a nominal sum. He decides that the "call of duty" is clearly to Mashton and 15*s.*

At Morlingford young Creasy gave offence by his doctrine to the people, and when Charles Christie went he took care to avoid the rock on which his fellow-student wrecked his chances there. He managed to please the Morlingford folk, and thereby secure an engagement to preach for them for 25*s.* per Sunday for a month. This terribly annoyed Mr. Creasy, who declared Christie was a canting humbug, who had cut him out and thereby done him out of his pay.

It was perfectly plain all they cared about was the opportunity of self-glorification and the profit attached. Admiring ladies often made the young theologians presents of handsomely-bound books they never read, or the money to buy them, which generally went in wine, or cigars, or a snug little supper.

Henry was, as may be imagined, not a little surprised at the Saturday squabbles over the money part of the business, and once he proposed to some of the

students who had nowhere to preach next day that they should go with him and preach in the lodging-houses. One young saint dubiously asked if they paid pretty well there, and hearing that there was no remuneration, they laughed heartily at the innocence of Pattison, who could think them capable of working for nothing.

Much surprised was he when one Sunday evening the senior student came home about half-past nine in a regular passion, exclaiming, "Confoundedly dirty trick!—scandalous conduct of the doctor!—infamously sold!"—and the like. It was found on explanation that he had been sent to a chapel where the minister was ill. It was a poor neighbourhood and the members were small, and they told him after service that their funds would not admit of giving any remuneration beyond *2s. 6d.* for his cab. "I gave them to understand I would not have gone had I known, as I could not afford to preach for nothing; and as for the half-crown, I said, they had better put it in the poor-box."

The students who were at home all deeply sympathized with their cheated brother, and did their best to console him under the unhappy circumstances. By the time he had cooled down he had begun to wish he had not refused the *2s. 6d.*, as he had discovered, on reflection, that it would have purchased ten cigars.

It may be imagined the doctor had something to do to make his plans tally with the rapacity of his young missionaries.

When Henry had been twelve months at Bunyan he went to reside at Hatchley Colne, a suburb of London, easily accessible by a railway that ran near the College. The air suited Lucy, and the seclusion of the spot was favourable to Henry's studies. There

were nearly three hundred inhabitants at Hatchley Colne, and there was a pretty little village church not half filled. But there were no less than ten Baptists and Independents living at the village, who deplored the absence of any place of worship but the little church. Amongst this Dissenting decade was a Mr. Story, and this Mr. Story was a great man; not great in a carnal and physical sense, for he was not five feet in height, nor great in intellect and mental acquirements, for he was very illiterate, but he was important in this way:—before removing to this pleasant suburb from London, where his business lay, he had been a Deacon at a well-known chapel and had tasted power, and now he was living at Hatchley Colne unnoticed and powerless, and he could not brook it; he lamented the days of yore when the minister trembled at his nod, and the people did his bidding, when his brother deacons knuckled under to him and he was the ruling spirit in that old-fashioned chapel in the Square, and now when Sunday came there was no place to go to but the church, where he could neither give out the hymn, pray, or even expound a chapter of Scripture; and his soul wasted within him as he reflected on the joys that had taken to themselves wings and left him. And he mused, and thought how grand it would be if a Baptist chapel could be raised in Hatchley Colne, and he be the Deacon of it, and perhaps the minister to boot; for could he not pray in public even for three quarters of an hour at a stretch, and if pray why not preach? Mr. Story was now fifty years of age, but ambition fired his sluggish blood, and a flush came over his white, flabby, wrinkled cheeks, as he pictured himself addressing the other wise Dissenters of the village, Sunday after Sunday, and becoming the shepherd of the little Non-

conforming flock. So he called a meeting in his drawing-room, and proposed that a strenuous effort should be made to raise a "cause," in the quiet suburb. He even offered his own house for preaching in.

The other nine mustered in force on the appointed evening, and it was resolved that a "cause" should be started forthwith. The Muffin-makers' Almshouses were situated in the neighbourhood, and there was a large room in the building which it was ascertained could be hired for a moderate sum per Sunday: it was done. The old ladies of the Asylum declared themselves not unwilling to assist at the services, as it would be a handy way of getting to chapel, and they were mostly opposed to the Church of England.

There were three other gentlemen Dissenters besides Mr. Story, and they all declared themselves able and willing to preach to any extent, so that the spiritual wants of the new cause seemed likely to flourish. The worst of it was that all the four would-be evangelists differed in their religious views. Mr. Story was mildly Calvinistic, Mr. Coggle was hyper-Calvinistic, Mr. Mudby was inclined to be Broad Church, and Mr. Weaver was of the Revival turn of mind. Now it was no easy matter to get all these opposing forces and incompatible elements to combine harmoniously, and many committee meetings of the proposed cause had to be held ere any mutual plan of action could be agreed upon. As for the ladies, they declared themselves willing to work with anybody or anything that was opposed to the Episcopal form of church government, and that would help forward the cause of Dissent.

The four gentlemen after much argument declared it would be most favourable to the success of the

affair if each preached by turn, so that if Mr. Story's Calvinism was too mild one Sunday, Mr. Coggle could fortify it on the next; and if Mr. Mudby in the succeeding week was too liberal in his method of handling the Gospel, Mr. Weaver could stir the people up when it was his turn, and temper Mr. Mudby's treacle by an extra allowance of his own brimstone; thereby they proved themselves worthy of Dr. Smith's esteem, as out of the teaching of the four antagonists the people ought to have been able to select and combine a satisfactory belief!

But when all this was arranged a difficulty still remained to be solved. How were they to constitute themselves a church? What mutual creed could they adopt? Mr. Coggle instantly proposed Calvin's "Institutes," or the "Westminster Confession of Faith," as their code of laws, which was opposed by the other three; Mr. Story volunteered to make a creed himself for the rest to subscribe, which offer was received with silence; Mr. Mudby was opposed to all creeds as being fetters for the conscience, and Mr. Weaver wanted to know what more they needed than their Bibles.

Three meetings were called, and Messrs. Coggle and Story both handed in lengthy documents they had composed to meet the case, but as each opposed the other, and the Broad Church and Revival members refused to sign any document of the kind at all, it was at last agreed that everybody should think as he liked. This little difficulty having been got over, Mr. Coggle observed that he hoped it was understood it was to be a strict Baptist Church, that is, one composed of members who had been dipped all over, as he begged to declare he could hold no communion with any other persons. Mr. Story protested this was too

exclusive, and was for admitting sprinkled sheep into the fold. Mr. Weaver declared he could commune with anybody who was under "grace," and leave water out of the question; and Mr. Mudby insisted that there must be no invidious distinction made, and that they must accept anybody who chose to join them. Mr. Coggle protested he would never "sit down" with any unimmersed persons, and it seemed likely that there would be a division in the camp, for he declared he would start a "Dipped Cause," on his own account, as he had heard that there were two other hyper-Calvinists lately come to reside in the place. However, Mr. Story's mollifying appeal for unity preserved peace, and the Baptism question like the Creed argument, was shelved for the time.

After various preliminaries the Committee of the Muffin-makers' Almshouses agreed to let their large room for 10*l.* per annum, to be used on Sundays only. The announcement was received with joy by the "Children of Grace," whose earthly habitation was Hatchley Colne, and it was arranged that the solemn event of planting a Nonconformist cause in the neighbourhood, should be celebrated by a tea-meeting. You can do nothing Evangelical without a tea-meeting. Learning, zeal, money, and industry, will do anything almost in every other direction, but people won't swallow the dissenting gospel without tea. Mrs. Griggs and Mrs. Miggins are ready with their donation to your subscription list, but you must give them the opportunity of drinking Bohea in public before they will disburse. Mrs. Griggs has her half-crown ready, screwed up in a bit of paper, as her contribution to your new conventicle, but you will not extract the said coin from her possession till you have plied her with the sixteenth cup of the beverage that "cheers

but does not inebriate." It is unfortunate that *tea* appeared so late in the history of European civilization. Had there been tea-meetings in the Dark Ages, there must have been more Dorcas meetings, more propagation of Scriptural pocket-handkerchiefs amongst the heathen, more "causes," and more white neckcloths; as it was, our Souchongless forefathers only built Westminster Abbey and York Minster, Universities and Hospitals, in a quiet, platformless sort of way.

Hatchley Colne boasted amongst its other attractions (such as its most salubrious cemetery and Elizabethan Muffin-makers' Almshouses), some very pretty and extensive tea-gardens. These gardens were the favourite summer resort of various Clubs and Friendly Societies, not that tea was the only beverage dispensed by the host; that is, if one may judge by the rather excessive hilarity exhibited by some of the temperance holiday folk, at the end of their visit to him. It was arranged that the inaugurative ceremony of founding Dissent in the village should take place at the tea-gardens. Mr. Coggle the Calvinist, and Mr. Weaver the Revivalist, had both objected to the tea-gardens as an ungodly place to patronize; Mr. Story overruled the objection, though he confessed that they *were* rather suggestive of fireworks, negro melody, and skittles; but having observed how they had on several occasions been patronized by a Baptist Sunday-school, and a highly evangelical Shoeblack Society, he succeeded in carrying his point. So Mr. Mudby was deputed to wait upon the proprietor of the Hatchley Colne Vauxhall, to inquire his terms for supplying one hundred adults with a good tea in his grounds.

"What do you require for the party?" said Mr. Wix.

"Well, unlimited tea, water-cress, bread and butter, not too thick."

"The butter or the bread?" interposed mine host.

"Oh! the bread, of course," said Mr. Mudby, "and plum cake."

Mr. Wix thought a moment.

"One hundred?" he inquired.

"Yes, more or less. What would you take them at per head, for about that number?"

"All grown up?"

"Well, there might be a few children."

Mr. Wix was thoughtful.

"Must have water-cress?" he asked.

"Oh, certainly."

"And plum cake; seed cake wouldn't do?"

"It ought to be plum," said Mr. Mudby.

Mr. Wix looked profound, and became involved in mental arithmetic. At last he exclaimed, with the air of one who had suddenly thought of the most important part of the business,—

"Dissenters or Church people?"

"Why, what on earth has that to do with it?" said the astonished committeeman.

"Everything!" said Mr. Wix triumphantly; "if they are Dissenters coming out to a shilling tea at the Great Southern Wauxhall, they'll literally starve themselves the day of the meeting, and nearly all the day before; they'll have neither dinner nor breakfast afore they come, so that they may stow away their full shilling's-worth. I know 'em, I do; I ain't had many Dissenting tea-parties at the Wauxhall, but I have never paid my bare expenses if I've taken 'em at a farden less nor a shilling a 'ed. Now when Church people go out to tea (I've been churchwarden here seven year come Whitsuntide, Mr. Mudby), they

don't blow theirselves out with immoderate quantities of tea, and pocket what cake and water-cresses they can't eat, but they takes a small glass or two of spirits in the grounds, and not spirits as they brings with 'em either—they encourages the house, Mr. Mudby."

Here the shrill voice of Mrs. Wix, from behind the bar, was heard,—

"Wix, don't you take no Methodises at a 'apenny less than a shilling a 'ed. We can't afford it; what we've got to give away in charity, we'll *give!*"

"But where's our profit to be, Mr. Wix?" suggested the astonished Mudby. "We can't charge more than a shilling; and we want to make something for the object we have in hand."

"Well, if you can manage without cake I'll do you bread and butter and cresses at 10*d.*; not that I shall get a farden out of it, but I don't want to be 'ard on yer."

So it was arranged that the bargain should stand thus; for as there was no other place in the locality where the demonstration against Episcopacy could be held, it resolved itself into a matter of that or none.

The use of the large room at the gardens was obtained wherein to hold the meeting, to which the tea and watercress bout was only the preface; the Honourable and Reverend Plunger Christmas was prevailed on to become the chairman, and several Dissenting lights consented to dazzle the suburban intellects on the important occasion.

Great efforts were made to induce Henry Pattison to assist, and to bring such of his fellow-students as could be made useful.

The tickets sold well, for the notion of a "cause" *took* in the quiet suburb.

Hatchley Colne was a very quiet suburb. Seldom indeed was its calm bosom ruffled by the mildest breeze. Once in a way a barrel-organ wandering from London would light upon its dreariness, and considerably add to it by a selection of airs that always commenced with "Ah che la Morte," and ended with "Adeste Fideles."

We are aware that it is the opinion of several intelligent persons that a party of negro melodists did, on one occasion, perform in the main-road, but though we cannot take upon ourselves to deny this assertion, it is a fact that they have never been seen there since.

As land was cheap in the vicinity, some London speculators purchased an immense plot, and laid it out in the most approved style as a nice healthy cemetery with a good prospect. But it did not take, and only served to add to the dreariness of the locality.

Can anything be more deplorable than a cemetery commencing business? A new shop in a new neighbourhood, with the rotten road still full of ruts and bricklayer's rubbish, unpaved footways and unfinished skeletons of houses, is a pitiable sight. But of all doleful spectacles commend us to a struggling cemetery!

Not that a cemetery is a very lively spot at the best, though if it is a flourishing concern and well tended it is a pretty sight, and an hour can be profitably spent amongst the tombs there. But the Great North Southern Cemetery Company, Limited (*very*) was a failure, a *dead* failure. People would *not* go to be buried there; whether they objected to the railway journey, or the hilly roads, or the dulness we cannot say.

There was everything for their comfort: the Dissenters had a large plot all to themselves, warranted never to have been profaned by foot of bishop or Popish rite; there was the unadorned field as Nature left it, with the exception of a very neat iron railing running round it; there was the consecrated part for the church people with quite a pretentious mortuary chapel in the centre, and most considerately separated from the Nonconforming dead, not merely by a low wall under which the consecration might have been suspected of oozing, or over which it might have flowed, but by a broad carriage-way with good stout walls and railings. This part had some little pretension to adornment, but all was overgrown with weeds, and the untended gravelled paths were scarcely distinguishable from the grass plats they divided. Altogether, no charitably disposed person could have wandered through the grounds without wanting to be buried straightway with all his family, in a separate brick vault at 10*l.* each, as per tariff exhibited at the lodge, just to encourage the Company to throw a little more "life" into the place. As it was, there was a grave here and a grave there, wide apart as plums in a boarding-school pudding; good-natured people sent their poor deceased relations there, and some of the creditors took their bills out in graves, so that occasionally the village of Hatchley Colne was enlivened by a funeral procession wending its way thither, especially as the railway gave up the scheme of carrying the funerals by steam, the antiquated road system being found more than sufficient for the demands.

If it had not been for the cemetery, the village would have had no lions to show the visitor, save the monster Lunatic Asylum and the Muffin-makers' Alms-

houses: now a lunatic asylum at one end of the quiet suburb, and an unsuccessful cemetery at the other, made up a scene not calculated very favourably to impress a stranger, though the inhabitants persisted in considering each of them an object of interest and attraction. The notion of a chapel took well, therefore, as a little diversion from the general dulness, and the meeting promised to be a success.

The appointed evening having arrived, and the great lights from London to rule the night, with it, the fountains of tea were opened and continued to flow for two hours, when the chairman apparently judging from the satisfied looks of his audience that they were in a fit state to be elocutionized and awakened to a sense of their Nonconforming duty, called on one of the gentlemen, in a white tie, seated near him to open the meeting with prayer. The worthy president then proceeded to inform his hearers that the present occasion was a very happy one for them all, for it was at last evident that the spiritual destitution in which they (the inhabitants of Hatchley Colne) had so long dwelt was to be ameliorated, and that the pure Gospel would soon be preached in their midst, and thereby save them the necessity of going so many miles to hear it as they must do now; "for, my dear brethren and sisters," said he, "sad as it may seem, you cannot hear the pure Gospel at the church hard by; you get attenuated Popery there, but you don't get the Gospel for which our glorious Puritan forefathers suffered so much; no real Evangelical truth, uncharitable as it may seem to assert, can ever consist with the forms and ceremonies and human admixtures of the Established Church."

A great deal more in this strain followed from the succeeding speakers, amongst whom the four com-

mitteemen figured conspicuously. This was a proud day for them. Mr. Mudby declared "he felt like St. Paul must have done when he planted the Gospel Tree in a land of Pagan darkness; it was a noble work to bring the Gospel to Hatchley Colne, generations yet unborn would rise up to bless the day the great tea-meeting took place to inaugurate the 'cause'!" The speaker resumed his seat with a modest expression amidst a storm of applause, and Mr. Story rose, at which there was much clapping and umbrella thumping.

"It was a solemn occasion," he meekly said, "on which they were met together; they were the pioneers of Evangelical truth in the benighted locality in which their lot was cast; they had to fight their way through much difficulty and opposition, but if his dear brethren and sisters would rally round him" (great applause), "he did not fear for the result; they would gird the gospel armour on, they would march on to the enemy's camp, they would do battle against priestcraft in every form" (tumultuous applause), "they would uplift the standard of Free Grace, they would storm the citadel of Popery in Hatchley Colne, and they would never rest till they had planted the banner of the *truth* on its dismantled fortress." (Great excitement, and feeling for money.)

The chairman next introduced to the meeting a gentleman whom he described as "a youthful Luther, an honoured instrument of grace, the Rev. Martin Figgins, who, though only seventeen years of age, had done great service in the cause of Free Grace Truth, and had converted nearly a whole court of poor benighted Irish by his open-air preaching, utterly undaunted as he was by their violence when he first went amongst them, and who had not abandoned the good work till he had succeeded in winning them from their idolatry

and making them members of the Bethesda chapel hard by; and this in spite of the efforts of three Jesuit priests whom this youthful theologian had openly confronted before all the people." When this prodigy had finished his speech and shown how Baptist doctrines properly set forth would ever prove the downfall of anything that withstood them, the enthusiasm of the meeting reached its climax, and the chairman whispered that now was the time to make the collection. Clearing off such watercress and bread and butter as was left, the exuberant committeemen seized each a willow-pattern plate and proceeded to the collection, which amounted to such a respectable sum as to cause the chairman to congratulate the people on their thoroughly Protestant and hopeful state. After a vote of thanks to which gentleman, the meeting separated, exulting in the prospect of abundant success.

Henry Pattison attended the meeting, but had refused to take any part in it, as there were elements in the new society he found it impossible to relish.

The result of the affair was that a formidable opposition to the unpretending services of the little church was started, and a congregation of nearly fifty persons met from week to week in the Almshouses to listen to the preaching of the committeemen in turn. But alas! it was found that they were an ill-assorted set of divines. Mr. Story's discourses were so weak and vapid it was impossible to criticize them at all, though many tried their best to do so. Mr. Mudby, however, was so very heterodox in his sermons, that a very decided Calvinistic gentleman sang out "false" in the midst of one of his harangues, much to the astonishment of the rest of the flock, and left the building, never more to darken its doors. When Mr.

Coggle's turn came he determined to vindicate the cause of orthodoxy with a discourse that should upset all that had gone before and atone for all the injuries it had received in the new meeting-house. Choosing a telling text, he laboured hard to produce something worthy of himself and the occasion; grand ideas were hazily circulating through his brain, snatches of oratory and brief outbursts of eloquence trembled on the tip of his tongue; he tried to grasp his subject fairly, but it seemed to elude him, and as the Sunday approached when he was to preach before the "small but select" assembly, he grew exceedingly fearful that he should break down in the attempt. The day arrived, he was not at all well; he trembled as he thought of Mr. Mudby's sarcastic face, of Mr. Story's pursed-up lips and important air, of Mr. Weaver's piercing gaze, ever on the watch for slips of the tongue, of Henry Pattison and the comical account he would give his college friends, if his sermon was the collapse he almost feared it would be.

Poor Coggle, he had led his audience to expect a great deal from him; he declared he was formerly used to preaching to large assemblies, and he was always so hard on everybody's failings in the pulpit that he felt sure there would be no mercy for him; he grew more nervous as the hour approached; he took a stiff glass of brandy-and-water, and tried to collect his thoughts. Alas, firstly, secondly, and thirdly would not be still for a moment; they were playing leap-frog with each other, as it were, and they tumbled and gamboled through his tormented brain to such an extent that he at last failed to tell which was which. It was plain that his sermon would heap disgrace on the miserable preacher. What was he to do? He could not say he was ill, he had been seen out before breakfast; so he

must face it and trust to his good fortune. So he ascended the rostrum with the air of one awaiting execution. The text was announced; the introduction went off well; three or four of the smart sentences, like obedient vassals, came and did his bidding, and all was going smoothly. The audience was evidently interested. The first division was now announced, and in the excitement of the moment the unhappy preacher plunged into what had been intended for use under secondly; and this made him foggy. The two divisions got entangled; his pretty bits and telling allusions, like imps, mocked him, and gamboled together, and would *not* get into their places at all; so that the room seemed all in a whirl with him, he grew incoherent, he waxed grievously warm, he trembled and was pained within, till in agony he cast an imploring look at his astonished congregation, and in the most touching tones said, with his right arm extended on his waistcoat, "My dear Christian friends, I have a pain in my stomach, I cannot go on; pray excuse me, I am not well; let us have a prayer-meeting instead of the sermon," and he sat down. Poor Mr. Coggle! he never preached again at Hatchley Colne; his terrible failure was the topic of conversation for many days, and he absented himself from the services altogether for a time.

And so things went on, incessant bickerings, innumerable petty jealousies, backbitings, and annoyances troubled the managers of the Nonconforming pioneers, and made the fold anything but an example to be copied.

Our hero was sorely scandalized. What religion, he thought, could there be in all this? How quietly the curate of the little church they were ever denouncing, went his way to the edification of his charge;

whereas the quarrels of the leading members of the newly-imported faith were scandalizing everybody. The head men quarrelled, and their families sided with them of course. So that when Mr. Story preached, Mr. Mudby and family would absent themselves, and *vice versa.* When Mr. Weaver said anything Mr. Mudby disliked, Mr. Mudby uttered an ill-concealed "pshaw;" and when Mr. Mudby's turn came, Mr. Weaver would sit as though on needles, and shake his head disapprovingly more than once in the course of a quarter of an hour. They used to have prayer-meetings on Sunday evening after service, and the leader would call on such male members as he chose to take a part in them. Sometimes an offended brother, who was cross, would, in answer to the invitation to "engage in prayer," declare aloud he "would rather not;" and the leader of the little service often contrived to spite an opponent, by neglecting to ask him to pray, when he knew he was burning to fire off his little rocket at heaven's gate. Then they used to pray *at* one another. Mudby would implore that Coggle's eyes might be opened to see the error of his ways, and Coggle would beseech more grace for the misguided Mudby. Story always managed to compliment himself, and by thanking God for the mercies He had bestowed on the village through his "'umble instrumentality," contrived to let the people know how highly they should estimate him.

Their devotional meeting, when a pleasant one, was merely a "Mutual Admiration Society," when otherwise, it became the medium whereby the brethren could abuse each other, or any who opposed them, with impunity. So sensitive to affront were they, that it was difficult to speak without offending one or other; and so frequently were the doctrinal quarrels renewed,

that it speedily became evident the members could not work together, small as was the new society. It became, in fact, a very hornets' nest. As we have said, when Mr. Story preached, one or two of the other committeemen would certainly absent themselves; therefore, when Mr. Mudby officiated, the Misses Story would revenge the insult offered to their papa's ministerial abilities by staying at home. They carried on the warfare against each other's doctrines in their prayers, in their Scripture lessons, in their sermons, and even in their hymns; till, what with praying, preaching, and singing at one another they made an exhibition of their religion, or rather their want of it, that would have been ludicrous if it had not been shocking in the extreme. Such a spirit of word-catching and hypercriticism was evolved as must have utterly ruined any remnant of godliness that might have lingered in such unhallowed breasts. It seems, alas, an effect very logical from the principles of the creeds they adhered to!

Every man his own creed-maker is a doctrine fraught with consequences that become dangerous to the peace, when fifty persons profess their fifty creeds, in a room only just large enough to hold them when comfortably seated!

But, as it may be supposed, all this did not last long. The more violent sticklers for their doctrinal peculiarities withdrew themselves from such a mixed assembly, and either "went to worship" at a distance, and in a style more congenial to their feelings, or, if no place could be found suitable, remained in their own homes, in preference to being annoyed by having their pet principles assailed.

As they had a student for the ministry living in their midst, it might have been supposed he would

have found some occupation in the new meeting-house. It was little, however, that Henry had to do with it, for, in the first place, the fact of his supposing education to be necessary to make a minister operated against his favourable reception with the committee; and, in the next, it must be confessed he was not slow to express his contempt of their proceedings, and this sufficed to exclude him from their friendship in some degree.

CHAPTER XVII.

"PREACHING."

HENRY had not been long at college ere it was discovered that he had talents that would help to make him a useful minister. So that he was soon in great request among such congregations as, being in want of ministerial help, thought proper to deal at the Bunyan Institute.

Nearly every Sunday now found him temporarily supplying the place of a regular minister in one or other of the Baptist chapels having connexion with the college. He was truly in his element; the question of pay never influenced him in his acceptance of an invitation, much to the disgust of his fellow-students, who declared he would "injure the business if he cut down the prices." His aim really was to win souls to God, to make inroads on Sin and Hell's work in the world. Of course his companions laughed at him for his Quixotic fancies, and assured him his zeal would soon burn itself out, and find him a regular "professional" like themselves in the end.

Many a time was he the object of a hearty laugh and caustic joke, as he entered the building in the morning for early class with his books from the distant suburb where he dwelt, and found his class-mates at nine in the morning but just risen from their slumbers, almost too drowsy to eat the plain breakfast they reproached the meanness of the council for providing them with, and grumbling at the hard fate which compelled them to lay aside the morning paper to attend the class, the bell for which was ever too prompt in sounding.

If the Bunyan apostles had one pet failing, it was an over affection for sleep. Dr. Smith was an early man, but he never could get his theological family to imitate him in this respect. And though there was the "boots" to knock at their doors, and apprise them that the bell for prayers was ringing its eight o'clock summons, it was a very small congregation that responded to it.

The breakfast-bell certainly commanded more respect, for few absented themselves from meals, though it was often threatened—"no prayers, no breakfast!" The threat was never carried out, and things went on as usual. At one time the doctor resorted to the expedient of posting up the attendance at morning prayers, and the list certainly did not go far to prove mortification or asceticism on the part of the persons concerned. They were, however, a great deal too clever to feel ashamed of themselves, and it was only the freshmen at Bunyan who blushed when reproved for a breach of the college rules. It was considered a mark of excessive verdure to pay any attention to the rules at all. And though every one signed a declaration on entering that, amongst other things, "he would not smoke on the premises," "would regularly attend prayers," and "would never be absent after ten

at night," he soon treated the rules as those persons in another quarter treat the Thirty-nine Articles and the rubrics of the Common Prayer, by explaining them away to the satisfaction of any remnant of conscience that it might have been consistent with the dignity of a Bunyan student to possess. All this surprised our hero, and helped to disperse the halo of glory that had first illumined college life in his imagination.

But he got used to surprises in less than twelve months. He thought that men whose professed object was to do God's work would at least be much in the habit of meeting to pray for His blessing on their labours. So far from devotional meetings being customary, however, he was surprised to find the ordinary morning prayers both neglected and contemned,

He was astonished too when one day he found two of our young apostles deciding which of them should go to preach some missionary sermons at a distant town by "tossing," and more surprised still when he found another of the heavenly ambassadors using the same means to settle a question that was troubling him, as to which of two favourite texts before him he should discourse from next Sunday! "Heads, 'Corinthians;' Tails, 'Timothy.'" He was surprised to find that all smoked in their rooms who could do so without becoming ill, and many often remaining out late at night, getting in at unseasonable hours either by certain gymnastic expedients, at which they were adepts, or by the connivance of the others within.

The pride and affectation of these young men was something extraordinary. Not a few began to style themselves "*Rev.*" before they had been six weeks on the books; and it was frequently the case that a young divine who had formerly earned his bread by manual labour, faring hard the while, when safely

ensconced under the mantle of the Bunyan Alma Mater, turned up his nose at the plain and wholesome every-day fare that he would formerly have been glad of even on a feast-day.

But though Henry saw enough to convince him that few of the men at Bunyan took any other than a purely £. *s. d.* view of their office, he did not allow his disgust at their conduct to hinder him from throwing himself heart and soul into the noble work before him; for it is a noble aim to try, by means however humble, to make the world better and happier, and he felt there could be no grander task than to instruct the ignorant and toiling men and women whom he met in their duty towards God, their neighbours, and themselves.

And so at the outset to preach simply what he conceived to be the Gospel was his only desire—to preach so that his hearers might understand and be induced to practise it.

But in time the Bunyan teaching began to modify Henry's homiletics. At the college you were taught to make a sermon by rules as precise as those for making a table. Now these rules were very valuable, and a good student, by their proper use, was much assisted in composing his discourse; yet with many the art was carried to extremes, and generally the product smelled too strongly of the lamp to leave any effect on the hearers other than to make them wonder at the preacher's cleverness. Seldom or never were the sermons in any sense practical; generally they were highly poetical and romantic essays; often they were catchpenny, that is they were constructed "to sell," and were composed purely to make the preachers popular, and bring grist to the mill. When a text took a student's fancy, he would medi-

tate upon it for some weeks; this they termed "brewing a sermon," or a "homily in the pot;" and when he had sufficiently digested it, he sat down carefully to write it out. When finished and a favourable opportunity for preaching offered, it would be carefully learned off and delivered *memoriter*. Now there is no doubt this is an excellent way to produce a good sermon, so far as its literary character is considered; but we hold that it is not the sole duty of a Christian man to hear sermons, or of a Christian minister to preach them; if it were, the plan would be excellent; as it is, we maintain that the people are made hypercritical, and the minister a slave of the pen and the memory by the practice. The congregation hire a sermon-grinder at so much per annum, and keep him to tickle their fancy, and excite their admiration from week to week. They go to chapel and think they fulfil their duty to God by putting out their devotional work to be done by deputy, and then listening to an elaborate essay on some subject beyond their comprehension.

This is called congregational worship, probably because the congregation have nothing whatever to do with it. The minister is the one object of attraction; the pulpit is the point round which all is made to revolve. As the parson is responsible only to those who pay him for his work, it is evident all he cares for is to make sermons; and all the people care about is to keep their ears open and see that they get what they pay for.

The students knowing this, their grand aim is to become clever preachers, and as a rule they succeed. There is little doubt that in England and America the best preachers, considered from the literary standpoint, are to be found amongst the more orthodox

Dissenting bodies. Henry soon discovered that if he would excel, he must adopt the usual method and make homiletics his study; for though the earnest and warm-hearted discourses he had been in the habit of delivering, might be quite as beneficial to the hearers as more finished compositions, they partook too much of the nature of mere rhapsodies ever to gain him much credit amongst his friends. So he set to work, and in time had produced some very respectable essays, calculated rather to gain *him* reputation than to benefit the hearers. They did advance his popularity, and here was the danger; here was the rock on which so many had struck. None are more susceptible to flattery than public speakers, and no public speakers are so tempted in this direction as Dissenting ministers. The people go into the vestry to thank the orator for his "blessed discourse," or for the "sweet time" he has given them if he has preached a more than usually telling sermon, and in a number of ways he soon discovers if he has produced a favourable effect on his people. Who is not susceptible to flattery? few are so clad in arrow-proof armour against it that there is no chink open, and Henry was no exception to the rule. Sentimental girls wrote him notes assuring him that they had just been "converted" under his wonderful ministrations, and old deacons and their wives were equally flattering when they assured him that his sermons "fed" them to that degree that they were growing "spiritually fat." Now when a young man cannot stand up in a pulpit for half an hour without converting a young lady, or expound St. Paul's epistles without fattening an already unctuous deacon's soul, it is more than probable he will turn out an egregiously conceited young divine. The fact is, that Protestant parsons live,

move, and have their being in the smiles of their "sheep," and therefore, few, very few can afford to be faithful. It would be as fatal to a young Nonconformist pastor to reprove the faults of his congregation in any other than the most general terms, as for your maid-of-all-work to give you a "bit of her mind" on things in general and your conduct in particular. If a minister is to be of any real use to his people he must not be their creature; the system that makes him so, is as opposed to any true idea of the Apostolic rule as can well be imagined. When Henry came to see that he was getting to be a pet with some of the people, he began to take more pains to make his pulpit style and matter attractive; he took to studying effect, and often had to reproach himself for affecting, more than he really felt in his pulpit ministrations. Poor fellow, he ought to have been learning himself instead of teaching others what the Gospel meant. Amongst other things, he discovered that the tastes of various congregations differed extremely, indeed there were few of them that had not some pet principles to be conciliated. You might be placed in an awkward fix if you were not previously made acquainted with the little peculiarities of the congregation requiring your services. For instance, some of the chapels were on very bad terms with the Anglican Establishment, others were affectionately disposed towards that Church; some, again, were red-hot Predestinarians, others were of the most liberal views in that respect; and not to know something about the tenets of the people you were to shepherd, might sometimes cause you to put your foot in it rather awkwardly. Henry was on one occasion invited to preach at the fine old cathedral town of Salchester, where there was a nice Baptist "cause" in a flourishing

state except that they were occasionally without a pastor; this arose from the very crotchety and overbearing manner of the squire of the concern, a Mr. Fullaby. Mr. Fullaby was of the "Agriculturo-Theological" turn of mind.

He could read very little, could not write at all, but could make his mark as the farm-lads well knew; the only book he ever studied was the Bible, he constantly boasted of the fact, so that he did not pretend to any great educational attainments, though he declared that their deficiency was more than made up for by the teaching of "the Spirit," which he protested had been abundantly bestowed on him. He was very wealthy, and nearly supported the "cause" out of his own pocket; he therefore looked upon the minister as peculiarly his own servant, as the 25*s.* per week he paid that individual came entirely from his purse. He felt therefore that he had a right to make "t' paarson praach t' gorspel as oi loike, seein' as 'ow oi payz 'un; if oi payz a ploughmon t' plough moi lond oi'll a' moi lond ploughed as oi loikes, sameway if oi payz a paarson t' praach in moi Hepzibah oi'll 'av 'im praach as oi loikes." Now Mr. Fullaby chose to have the Anglican Establishment abused once every Sunday at least in *his* "Hepzibah," as he termed the conventicle he had built. Dissent never flourishes over well in a cathedral town, the atmosphere is altogether antagonistic to its growth. Dissent is plebeian and modern, Cathedralism is aristocratic and ancient, stiff and formal as the pillars, lofty as the spire, clammy and cold as the cloisters, and gloomy as the whole. It would seem as though the society of our cathedral towns had dwelt under the shadow of the ancient structures till it had partaken of their character. As for Salchester, it was evidently suffering from Dean

and Chapter on the brain, from the mayor to the boots at the "Mitre," from the solemn bookseller of whom you purchased Cathedral Prayer-books, to the youth who delivered your morning paper. Yes, Salchester Cathedral sat heavily on the town, so it was very cold, very damp, very solemn, and very prim. The enjoyments were solemn, and Sunday was perfectly awe-inspiring. You had to mind your P's and Q's or you would soon lose caste in Salchester; it was rather an arctic life to lead, but then you had it out in other ways; there was the bishop and the bishopess and the little bishops, the dean and the deaness and the little deans, the archdeacon the archdeaconess and the little archdeacons, the canons, canonesses and *minor* canons, besides many other grave and reverend persons all employed to look after your spiritual welfare, and buy your tea and sugar or drapery goods if you had such to sell, so that if you were sharp you could be good with all that help to any extent, and if you went the right way to work might make it pay very well into the bargain.

But you mustn't go to chapel! So it was only those who could afford to set the Salchesterian Cathedralism at defiance, or were too poor to lose aught by their Nonconformity, who made up the various Dissenting congregations that had the daring to spring up and attempt to flourish under the shadow of the proud spire of the noble church that was the stronghold of Anglicanism for the South of England. The Salchester tradespeople and the inhabitants generally looked down on the poor Nonconformists, who had no deans to look after them and no canons to care for their souls, and despised them accordingly; and the Nonconforming party being thus cast out of the pale

of Salchesterian Society, behaved as outcasts generally do, neglected itself, waxed more and more vulgar, and affected to pity and "pray for" the people whose shepherd was the bishop, and whose shepherdess was his lady, and who had deans, archdeacons, and canons, in place of thumping, pounding, roaring "Gospel guides," and rotund, shiny, rubicund deacons.

It happened that Salchester Baptist Chapel wanted a pastor at the time of which we write. It was Mr. Fullaby's chief ambition to have become the minister of the place he had fostered. He built Hephzibah, and threw open its doors to such of the Salchester folk as chose to come. He only asked in return that the people would sit under the shadow of his pulpit, and let him preach to them. Now it came to pass that Mr. Fullaby, all excellent farmer as he was, did not prove "acceptable" as a preacher, the congregation did not suffice to make Hephzibah look lively, and when Mr. Fullaby came to see that his preaching talents only consisted of a few pet phrases and Calvinistic peculiarities that a single hour within the four walls of the narrow pulpit more than sufficed to exhaust, he reflected that albeit there was much honour in being a shepherd, there was much more comfort in being a sheep; he wisely resolved to lay aside the burdensome crook that so ill became him, and return to browse as of yore. As Mr. Fullaby and his friends possessed little education themselves, they naturally disliked it in others, especially holding that no educated preacher could be the channel of heavenly teaching. Accordingly they looked about them for a supply of laymen for their pulpit; but not succeeding so well in this direction as they could have wished, after many unfortunate mishaps and sad scandals, they at length yielded to the advice of a

friend, and applied to Bunyan College to help them to a shepherd, and they forthwith became the object of Dr. Smith's tenderest regard.

Learning that their "views" were rather hyper-Calvinistic, the worthy divine bethought himself of several students who were in that line, and sent them to Salchester.

One young divine so commissioned, with strong leanings towards election, thought he was predestinated to wed good Farmer Fullaby's well-dowered daughter, and told the worthy man so before he had been a month in the town. But it did not answer; and the young divine, discovering he had "no call," returned to Bunyan.

The doctor next sent them a student whose preaching was vastly to the taste of all the worthy people. He managed to ingratiate himself with the whole of the flock from the farmer to the door-keeper, and the praises of Mr. Flynn's "beautiful preaching" were in every one's mouth. He would certainly have been elected their minister, had he not injured his standing with Mr. Fullaby by borrowing sundry sovereigns at various times which he neglected to repay—this, by-the-bye, was not an uncommon thing for a student to do, when a wealthy magnate was incautious enough to profess himself under deep obligations for spiritual food, received at the hands of a needy parson. Mr. Fullaby discovered that brother Flynn's preaching no longer "*fed*" him when he saw no hopes of his loans being repaid, and if the farmer declared himself "unfed," be sure the rest of the congregation professed themselves hungry. Few would presume to contradict Mr. Fullaby as to the feeding properties of a sermon in his own chapel. Such was the state of things, when one Saturday Henry was requested to

take the next train to Salchester, and try his powers there. He went, and full of confidence too, nothing daunted by his fellow-students' failures. Preachers never are; like the ladies, they are always confident in their own charms and persuaded of their power to captivate. Don't you wonder how it was that women were found ready to marry Henry the Eighth, after the third and fourth ladies had failed to please him? Depend upon it his Majesty would have experienced little difficulty in finding a wife, even if he had gone on to the tenth decapitation; and so it happens that though your Bethesda pulpit has embraced fifty different preachers in almost as many Sundays, the fifty-first preacher's heart beats high with the hope of your electing him, notwithstanding the ghosts of the half hundred predecessors, mock his innocent faith in your criticism.

It was supper-time when our young preacher knocked at the awe-inspiring farmer's door, not without a trifle of that trepidation we may fairly suppose to have agitated the breasts of Henry's later queens when speculating on *their* chances of success. He was shown into a large and gaudily furnished room where sat the agriculturo-theologian by the fire-side, surrounded by the various members of his family. They were not long in submitting their young guest to a severe cross-examination as to his "views;" it was conducted in a manner calculated to terrify our itinerant shepherd not a little. The farmer opened fire, and the good hostess and her sons and daughters each looked up their arms. "So thee be coom to see if thee's loikely to soot us in Salchester, young mon?" This was coming to the point certainly, and took Henry rather by surprise: he nervously answered that he had come at Dr.

Smith's request to preach to them for the following Sunday, and should be happy to remain longer if it was desired.

"Well, we shall see about that young mon, we shall see; we can soon tell down here what a mon's made on, can't us, woife?"

"Oh yes, my dear, the Salchester brethren are quick to detect whether or no they are fed with the true milk of the kingdom—none more so, I should say—what do you say, Obadiah?"

"Well, mother, I must say we knows what gospel truth is, if we don't know nothin' else: bless the Lord, our eyes are not blinded to the light of the kingdom, though book larnin' ain't much in our way. Why, sir" (with a searching look at his miserable victim, who was by this time undergoing the rack in prospective), "you'll stand up to-morrow, God willing, and minister to a congregation of gospel preachers; nearly every brother in our church has himself proclaimed the gospel, and there ain't a man of any years amongst us who isn't a prophet of the Lord; as for the sisters of the flock, though they don't preach theirselves, they can cut a sermon into little bits and argufy every point with a Bible knowledge and spiritual discernment as would shame many a regular minister."

What a vision arose before the mental view of the miserable Henry, may be better imagined than described. Meekly remarking that it was a great honour to address such a saintly company, he tried to divert the conversation into another channel. Glancing round the room, his eye fell on a small but fairly stocked book-case, and noticing a rather nice edition of Shakspeare, he made bold to ask the family what they thought of the great poet.

"Well," said the farmer, "he's got some very good

bits about mankind and things in general, but oi don't see much rhyme in his poytry, and on the whole oi must say oi thinks Dr. Watts best poet—oi do. Besides, plays and play-actors oi can't abear; it makes me mad to see folks a wasting their time over such stuff when they ain't read 'alf their Bibles, no not 'alf their New Testaments; besides, oi'm told as how Shakspeare died drunk! ah, Dr. Watts didn't die drunk!"

Feeling it safer not to pursue the subject further, he plunged into agriculture and asked after crops, and while so engaged, the maid brought supper in. Drawing round the board, a long prayer by way of grace was said by the host, who had no sooner done, than disregarding the handsome carving fork at his side, he seized the cold leg of mutton by the shank, and whittled off the slices of meat as though he were trimming a hedge-stake. The meal over and family worship concluded, the young preacher retired to rest; he began to reflect on the terrors of the coming day, it was evident his audience would be disposed to regard his utterances with about as much sympathy as the counsel for the defendant listens to plaintiff's principal witness; interested, doubtless, but interested only with a view to the process of vivisection. All too vividly, he saw beforehand the array of upturned quizzical faces waiting to dissect his utterances and pick his pet sermon to pieces as soon as the text should be announced, just as the students at poor old St. John's watched the body placed on the dissecting table with their instruments ready. It is no wonder that a passing shudder crossed his soul; "And yet why should I fear," he soliloquized, "have I not my two best sermons in my bag? the morning one from Jeremiah, has it not been already preached a score of times? yes, to-morrow it will come of age!

twenty-one times those well-turned paragraphs will have been delivered, and those warm utterances poured forth! I can't break down, let them look as coldly at me as they may. Why, I could say it all in my sleep, I verily believe, bit of poetry to wind up with and all. So successful as that sermon has been too! why it is a little fortune to a fellow, and I can make it suit any congregation as neatly as can be; there's the election paragraph to go in for the 'hypers' and the 'faith without works' clause for the 'lopers,' all fitting neatly to their places like a bit of scenery in a play, looking for all the world as though made for the occasion. Oh, it *must* be all right! hang the Bumpkins! if they bother me I'll take them up into the stars for a 'wonderful firmament on high' paragraph, and having astronomically astonished them with my sidereal wonders, will plunge them into an abyss of technicalities, that shall awe them with my profundity. I'll get over them as I did the Wickton folk, when I burst forth into thirty lines of 'Paradise Lost,' when I feared they saw I was running dry, and they all went out of chapel saying 'What depth! what a clever young man!' to one another. It'll be all right, good night, old Fullaby!" and so he tumbled into bed, having peeped into his bag to assure himself that the pet sermons were still there, fully confident that he should astonish the Salchester natives ere many more hours had passed.

But when the eventful time had come he felt far less confident than he expected, for the breakfast-table was graced by two of the deacons of Hephzibah, who echoed everything the farmer said; and the trio performed was not of a reassuring nature; it was evident they had all agreed at Salchester to test our hero's zeal in the same way the monks do their candidates, by

keeping him out in the cold till they saw what he was made of.

He got on fairly at the morning service, in fact, he felt sure he had made a conquest. He opened the battle by a vigorous cannonading by way of introduction, full of hard words, that had the effect of making some of the unsophisticated bucolic critics a little less confident in their powers than when dealing with one of their own set.

Next came a running fire of comment on the various opinions of theologians on the passage he was dealing with, and this harassed the enemy considerably. Then a grand charge by way of Firstly, followed by a hand-to-hand conflict with imaginary opponents, and a dropping fire that finished them off at a rate perfectly satisfactory to the lecturer at all events. Then came grand charge number two, and this subdued the remaining foes amongst the congregation, till at last he took them by storm with such a flight of oratory as made them surrender at discretion, and resolve to yield up the citadel, or in other words the pulpit, without reserve; and all this was brilliantly executed without any necessity for bringing in the corps of reserve of Milton's heavy brigade, that was to have done the business had the rest been insufficient. It was not without a feeling of having deserved it that Henry received the congratulations of the people in the vestry at the close of the service; he felt sure if the evening were as great a success as the morning he should be invited to accept the pastorate.

"There is many a slip betwixt the cup and the lip;" and this is how it came to pass that the conquering hero did *not* come, but had to beat an inglorious retreat, as discomfited as one of his own imaginary opponents in the pulpit.

Our attentive readers will remember that Henry had a weakness for Cathedral Song, and so when dinner was over he intimated his desire to attend afternoon service at Salchester Abbey Church; the family were aghast, Mr. Fullaby seemed horrified in the extreme at the bare idea of their minister demeaning himself and the "cause," by assisting at the Popish ceremonies of the Abbey, after preaching "free grace" at "Hepzibah" in the morning. Horrible thought! their white-tied young parson listening to the seductions of the cathedral as though no great gulf were fixed between the Strict Baptist fold and the gay, giddy, organ-blowing, surplice-wearing, wicked world without! Yea! as though the "garden walled around" had thrown down its barriers, and the "little spot of hallowed ground" had become no longer sacred! Oh, it was too dreadful! and Mr. Fullaby groaned inwardly at the disgrace it would bring on Hephzibah. Why, the Bishop would hear of it and exult, and the little bishops would clap their hands; the Canons would hear the evil news, and the minor canons sing for joy at the defection of "Hepzibah." But the young man went to the cathedral that afternoon, and little thought of the commotion he had caused in the breasts of the elect by his mad resolve; for though he feared he had displeased his host, he could not think him narrow-minded enough to care seriously about it: so he enjoyed the Psalms and the Anthem, the architecture and the stained windows, and thought of the old days when the monks sat in the choir and the walls never ceased to re-echo their songs of praise. He grew thoughtful and æsthetic, and inwardly it must be confessed thought poorly of Dr. Watts and the melodies of "Hepzibah," and "Salem." It was over, the organ ceased its thunder,

and the shades of evening fell on the cathedral as he mused and wondered why "the elect" had all cracked voices, why they always screeched their hymns or drawled them languidly along, why they thought it wicked to like the Cathedral Service and boys in surplices. He wondered too why it was not a mark of grace to love the liturgy of the Church of England, and why it was not better to pray in such beautiful words than trust to the promptings of the moment when addressing God. He arrived at the farm-house as tea was preparing, full of the service he had just attended, and commenced congratulating the family on the splendid choir their noble cathedral possessed, a compliment that was not appreciated by his audience. Evidently they were sorely displeased, and this time they took no pains to conceal their anger at his unseemly conduct. He was informed that the congregation would never tolerate such proceedings as he had been guilty of, that it was evident he was not a thorough Nonconformist, that he had compromised his principles and given the enemy cause to rejoice. If the family spoke thus the congregation would be sure to chime in with the farmer's ideas, poor Henry saw that he was doomed as regards Salchester, just as he bid fair to succeed so well. In such a state of mind it was miserable to have to preach, had the wretched victim known what was in store for him it would have been impossible. While he was revelling in the devotional treat he had just enjoyed, the farmer and his worthy children had trotted into the town and made all the principal people of the chapel acquainted with the delinquencies of the young student. Mrs. Williams threw up her hands in affright, and wondered how he dared come to Salchester to insult them thus. Mr. Spriggins protested that there

were several expressions in the morning sermon, eloquent though it was and surpassing anything *he* could do in the way of pulpit language, that led him to suppose the preacher quite capable of doing as he had done. All agreed he must be punished, and it was arranged that the congregation should severally be warned to desert the preacher at the evening meeting, and the ladies volunteered to go round to as many as they could and prevent their attendance.

This plan was received with applause, and was forthwith put in execution, and so effectually, that when the hour for service arrived it was a long way in advance of the congregation. Only seven persons were present—one old woman whom nobody knew anything about, one small boy with one big baby, a servant girl with her young man, who soon found the dreariness insupportable and went out, one soldier and Mr. Fullaby. Here was a pretty state of affairs; here was an audience to appreciate our hero's sermon, on the "Relation of the Beautiful to Religion." The soldier fidgetted about on his seat, the baby wouldn't be quiet, the old woman took inordinate quantities of snuff, the gas took to singing to keep itself in spirits, and the empty benches staring the unfortunate preacher in the face all the while, spoiled his best sentences and made his philosophical essay on the Beautiful a dreary farce. What was he to do? If he didn't preach the full three-quarters of an hour required of him, he would be afraid he hadn't earned either his supper or the 15*s.* a sermon he had been promised; he felt it was a dear bargain for Hephzibah that night, 2*s.* a head for Gospel for the adults, and 1*s.* for the baby; besides, the young woman and her sweetheart had left the place before she had had half her share; it was a sad reverse to

the morning success, and all for what? He blamed his imprudence, and wished himself heartily out of the mess. Of course he saw there was no hope for him at Salchester. So before he closed, he inserted a word or two about the beauties of our old cathedrals, and the spirit which raised those noble piles, taking care to rebuke the Puritanical Vandalism that had injured them in the past, and would prevent one, if possible, from enjoying them in the present. Mr. Fullaby was boiling with rage, and scarcely vouchsafed a civil word to Henry on the way home. The rest of the family took care to let the young parson know they had been to hear the Independent minister, who was a "Gospel preacher," and a "Nonconformist to the backbone." At family prayer the young divine had to officiate for a very unsympathetic company, and though his depressed spirit found utterance in words of loving supplication for all in that house, they failed to enkindle within the breasts of any of that hard, cold, Calvinistic group, a single responsive glow. With a heavy heart he retired to rest, praying that the time might come when he should find a people to understand and love him. His pride had received a salutary rebuke, and his confidence was checked for the future very considerably. He felt he was *not* a consistent Dissenter. He did *not* hate the Church of England, or for that matter the Church of Rome! He had read more about each of late, and felt that he had understood neither. He was too cosmopolitan to have a strong feeling either way. He was a learner, and in search of a creed. Early next morning he left the town, rejoiced once more to be free from thraldom; he felt another man when on the railway-platform; there, at least, he could say his soul was his own, and dare to think for himself. So he plunged

into a volume of Metaphysics, and moralizing on the bucolic order of intellect, arrived at home.

Strange news awaited him; Dick, the bed-maker, had received a "call." Dick was a character; he entered the college as Boots at the age of sixteen, but soon got above his business, and hankered after the pulpit-work the students were engaged in. He obtained cheap preaching-jobs on the sly when it was his Sunday out, used to get lessons from the younger students in Divinity and Greek, and would practise pulpit-oratory whenever and wherever he was alone. One day Henry heard a fierce declamatory exercise going on in the next room to his own; listening, he heard the voice of Dick, as though preaching, and, peeping through the half-open door, was intensely amused to see the bed-maker, now plunging at the feather-bed, now vigorously shaking the bolster, as he fiercely addressed them as the enemies of the Lord.

"The Lord shall awake as a giant refreshed" (a plunge at the bed); "He shall thrash the nations as wheat" (terrible pummelling for the feathers); "He shall winnow them as chaff" (fearful shaking at the ticking); "He shall rule them with a rod of iron; He shall dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel" (frightful assault on the bolster and pillows); "He shall sweep them away in His fierce wrath"—here the bed-clothes were sent flying to the other end of the room, and Henry's escaped merriment stopped the fun. Dick settled on 40*l.* a year, but is a rising man.

CHAPTER XVIII.

COLLEGE FRIENDS.

HENRY had many friends at Bunyan, but as usually happens, one special favourite was selected who soon became more than a brother to him. Far dearer to him than James Dalton at the hospital ever had been, was Albert Wells, though his old medical companion was still a valued friend and constant visitor at his lodgings, which ere long Henry found expedient to remove nearer to the college. It was in the summer of 18— that he found his increasing literary occupations took up more time than he could afford unless he strictly economized it; and the distance of Hatchley Colne from the college rendered it advisable to remove from it. Lucy regretted the necessity for this step though she did not oppose it. Albert Wells was a congenial spirit to Henry; both were earnest, passionate, and *spirituel*, as the French say; both had chosen the ministry from a desire to save the souls of men. Albert was, however, far superior in genius to Henry, his tone loftier and his spirit more refined. He seemed to live in the abstract and ideal, his was a world of poetry and sentiment, and if his plans for helping mankind were lofty and noble, they were too transcendental and Quixotic to be in any sense practicable. Hard work and friction against the daily cares of a business life would have made a useful man of Albert. The Bunyan studies would have helped him could they have been separated from the spirit of the house. As it was, college life speedily exercised an evil influence over him. It was injuring Henry, but it was ruining Albert. The latent fire in the flint is not discovered

till its contact with the steel; the dead, dull, cold crystal seems incapable of a single brilliant gleam till the sun calls it forth; and many a dull, matter-of-fact youth entered Bunyan without a brilliant idea in poetic thought, who, by attrition against the strong intellects around him, soon began to display a sparkling genius that might have slept unheeded had he followed his old career.

It was the current opinion in the college, more especially with the students, that the Royal road to wisdom was poetry. One of their axioms was, that in the poets you had all that was necessary to make one happy and wise. So, though many a man entered the place who had never read a line of Tennyson or Wordsworth, he soon found he should be left behind in the race if he did not join the poetic band of explorers, whose aim was ever to light on some new territory of thought, or add a new planet to the chart of the mental firmament. We have Shakspeare's authority for classing the poet with the lunatic, and it is certain the morbid taste for poetry at the college was the ruin of many a fine young man's mind; true, the tutors seeing the evil, tried to steady the vessel with a good ballast of Greek roots and Hebrew inflections, but the encumbrance was too often cast overboard, and many a fine ship became a wreck through an inordinate desire to sail farther than any other explorer had ever been before, and find out some *terra incognita* that should make a mental Columbus of the fortunate voyager. To follow in the beaten track of thought, and not attempt to strike out a path through the surrounding country, was a thing not to be borne by these ambitious spirits. "The New" rather than "the True" was the object of their search, and many a skeleton now bleaches in the arid waste, the prey of

this feverish desire for novelty. Albert Wells, full of youthful ardour, graced with glorious mental gifts, with a spirit which under proper training might have become a beacon light on the mountains of fame, and a star in the vault of heaven, became, alas! a mere phosphorescent glow, a meteor dashing rocket-like along the sky to die out in blackness, and sink into darkness for ever. Oh Heresy! Oh Pride, your accursed parent! who shall write out the indictment of your myriad murders, or count the tombs where lie your slain? Cruel War! how many victims hath your insatiate appetite destroyed? Relentless Plague! gaunt Famine! and destructive Elements! shall there be no period to your havock amongst the human race, and must ye ever pursue our kind with relentless hate? Suffice not the hecatombs of victims past, and will not the heaps of your dead content you yet? Alas! you still pursue, and we still fall before you. Yet it would be well for us were ye our worst foes. You only seek our bodies, and are content with physical pain and corporeal death. But heresy more cruel than famine that denies us sustenance, more dreadful than pestilence that blasts our life, in a thousand insidious forms wanders in our midst, and points the poisoned dart of hell at our *souls*. You seek out the gifted, the brilliant, the strong from amongst us, and you taint them with the venom of the old serpent, and we glory in the ruin, and pride ourselves on our corruption.

The Nonconformist *alumni* of the present day play with infidelity, and nurse in their bosoms the serpent that destroys them.

German philosophy and negative theology found an easy prey in the impulsive and generous Albert Wells. He soon found little glory was to be gained by following the teaching he had imbibed at his cradle.

"Let me find out for myself a scheme of religion," said he; "let my relations with the Unseen be of my own contracting; I will begin *de novo*, and will myself be my own director in my dealing with the Divine." He soon declared himself without any creed, the only true idea to his notion of a student; as in mathematics, so in theology, he would take nothing for granted. "Proof," he cried, "show me your credentials!" So he turned his articles of faith out of doors, and proceeded to unfurnish the chambers of his mind, and arrange for the admission of fresh guests, who should prove their title ere they were admitted.

It was upon the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible that he first seriously attacked Henry, and it was here he found means to pierce the too weak armour that protected his orthodoxy. It was soon observed with pleasure amongst the young men that Henry's mind was yielding to doubt. It was their maxim that there was no hope for him in the pursuit of knowledge until it did yield; they held with Tennyson,—

> "There is more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds."

So they welcomed the new explorer, and did their best to widen the breach in the walls their gifted companion had succeeded in making.

It was not with any great alarm the tutors observed, one after the other, the students falling into rationalism. All would be right in the end they thought, and a little travelling and mental wild oats' sowing would do the young men no particular harm. Of course they expected their doubts would all be scattered to the winds when they came to settle and appear before the world as recognized leaders of thought in the Dissenting world.

Sometimes, notwithstanding this tacit connivance on the part of the principals, the bounds of moderation in this respect would be overstepped and an explosion would take place. Such an event happened during young Pattison's last session at college. Three of the advanced guard in the corps of philosophical exploration so ill concealed their freethinking principles, that the college in consequence got an ill name out of doors. The watchful Boanerges had one evening denounced the institution from his pulpit as "unsound," in consequence of certain bold opinions expressed by the aforesaid dauntless spirits at a public meeting. It was a case to be looked into by the council, and, as was feared, the committee of inquiry found more than they cared to find about the unsettled condition of the students' minds. However, as the state of affairs had got wind, a vigorous course of action was necessary. Matters were precipitated by a conversation which Dr. Smith held with the senior theological class one morning on the question of the inspiration of the Bible.

Albert Wells had given vent to some very "advanced" or, in ordinary parlance, heretical opinions on the Scriptures; and two other students, who had long been suspected of extreme ideas, confessed to a strong sympathy with his heterodox views.

Henry was in class at the time, but abstained from taking the side of the opponents of orthodoxy because, though he could not altogether condemn them, he had not sufficiently studied the subject to enable him to oppose Dr. Smith on that occasion.

No little commotion was caused by this event. The three offenders were detained by the doctor after class, and were given to understand that the views they had that morning expressed were entirely

inconsistent with their position as students for the ministry, and that he should bring the case immediately before the council.

Although they strongly remonstrated, this was done; and when we remember that the aforesaid council was composed of laymen as well as many old-fashioned, steady-going parsons, it was plain they had little hope of consideration from that body.

Albert Wells was soon called upon to state in writing the sentiments on inspiration he had propounded at the class. Long were the consultations he had with young Pattison on the subject: neither doubted what the event would be. The council would most certainly make an example of some one, and that the daring, impulsive Wells would be the scapegoat was the general opinion. Henry was certainly shocked at the views of his friend, when they came to be written down in black and white. Still, though he counselled prudence and diffidence on the abstruse subject in debate, he could not but admire the fearless attitude of those whose ministerial existence depended on the decision of their superiors as to their opinions.

It was currently reported out of doors that some of the present students held that St. Paul and St. John were only inspired in the same way as Shakspeare or Plato; that they denied the eternal nature of future punishment, and the Divinity of Our Blessed Lord. The consequence was, that the subscribers declined in many cases to renew their subscriptions, and many of the warmest supporters of the institution withdrew their patronage from it, until it should have purged itself of the stain attaching to its character. There was no help for it but for Albert Wells and his companions in heresy to forward a written declaration of

their views on the Bible to the council.[1] They demanded to know what these young men did *not* believe, and a very ugly figure they made when they attempted to describe *that* on paper. Young Wells contented himself with stating the following propositions :—

"1. I do *not* believe that the inspiration of the men of old time, who wrote the books of the Old and New Testament, is of a different kind to that which Christians may now enjoy.

"2. I do *not* think that the Bible has any authority whatever, except such as it can establish for itself by its own inherent worth, venerableness, and dignity."

This was followed by some explanatory statements which aimed at toning down what would otherwise read very ominously.

A few days after the above statement had been considered by the authorities of the college, the three implicated students were requested to meet the committee appointed to investigate the matter, and there express themselves more fully; and if they thought proper, on mature reflection, to retract their stronger statement, they would have an opportunity of doing so. But their resolve was taken to conceal nothing, to retract nothing, but speak out boldly.

Perhaps if we searched deeply the feelings which actuated them, a lurking desire to make martyrs of themselves for the cause of intellectual freedom, had something to do with their resolve. Be this as it may, it is the fact that the result of the interview was such, as to leave the council no resource but to expel the offenders, and this they unanimously resolved to do.

Before they had time to do this, Albert Wells for

[1] This trial for heresy did actually take place as described, at a Dissenting seminary in London. The whole affair was published by one of the expelled as his defence.

himself and friends wrote to the council demanding to know by what creed they were to be judged, declaring that as they had never been called upon to sign any articles of faith, but merely to declare their belief in the ordinary tenets of the Baptist persuasion, it would be unfair to try them by the council's interpretation of those tenets, when perhaps their own was equally sound.

Nothing struck young Pattison in all this unhappy business so much as the reasonableness of this demand:—"Where is the creed by which we are judged? What law have we broken? From what path have we gone astray?" And till then he had never so clearly seen that after all it was but a matter of private judgment for each side. Both quoted Scripture, both put their own interpretation on its utterances, they had nothing else to guide them.

Everybody, therefore, in the college thought the authorities had been caught on the horns of a dilemma by the acute Wells, and all anxiously awaited the result of his very sensible demand. After some little delay the reply came; no notice was taken of the requisition, and they were simply informed that the council considered the three offenders unfit to retain their position as students, and desired them to withdraw from the college for a few months, till they should have had time for reflection.

This they refused to comply with, being determined to throw the responsibility of their expulsion entirely on the hands of the heads of the place; they did not consider they were doing wrong by remaining in an institution founded certainly not to teach infidelity, however far short it might have fallen as a seminary for teaching men to become the spiritual guides of the age. They

considered they were not out of sympathy with its objects; but the council thought otherwise, and informed them they had no alternative but to expel them, and expelled they were accordingly; of course a great sensation was the result, not only in the house but without. They were bright spirits who were turned out, and were sadly missed. Though it was hard to blame the authorities, yet it was felt that it was the spirit of the college which had made them heretics, if such they were; and the views they suffered for, were after all no doubt secretly held in a greater or less degree, not only by many who were left behind, but also by a large number of prominent ministers in the sister denominations, as well as the Episcopal Church.

Besides, the tendency of the present age is towards great latitude in theological questions, and the right of every man to put his own gloss on the doctrines of the Bible, seems to be the very root and mainspring of Protestantism itself. Men accordingly thought that old Popery had been at work, and that the deliberations of the Council of Bunyan were not so widely different after all from those of the Holy Office, with this exception—the latter, it must be confessed, had a settled creed and code of laws to guide them, whilst the former had none.

It set everybody thinking; and none took the matter more to heart than young Pattison. It was his last session, and that was drawing rapidly to a close. He felt in a state of mind anything but conducive to entering on the Baptist ministry with confidence and faith. He had received a shock—he had commenced to waver. What was he to do? Should he abandon his aims for the present till he felt more confident? He could not bear the thought of this,

and resolved to continue the course, he had chosen as he believed for the best. Amidst all that was uncertain, this he knew—his love for God, his love for the souls of men, and the extension of Christ's kingdom on the earth was unabated, was growing!

After his friends were fairly gone, more than one of the students asked himself, with Henry, if he could conscientiously remain; and more than one said, No. So unsettled were their minds, they seemed to feel that no congenial home for them was the Baptist Pastorate. In various literary or scientific ways they set to work, and are now influencing their age by their earnest yet evil influence—for evil it must be to weaken men's faith in Revelation, and sow the seeds of doubt in minds only too ready to question what God has said, explain away His warnings, and dispute His claims.

The erratic Albert determined to devote his future studies to medicine, and a few months after his expulsion, saw him working away to pass the examination of the College of Surgeons. He eventually succeeded; but ever impatient of the voice of authority, and hating everything like a beaten path, he must even in his new career take up with the fanciful and extreme. So he wandered into medical heresy, and became a Homœopath and a spiritualist.[2]

Henry often heard from him, as well as the rest of the former students, and it is worthy of remark that having once begun to cast off some of the slender bonds of such authority as they had formerly acknowledged, they soon found it more consistent to rid themselves of all; and, accordingly, one became a Socinian Lecturer, and another a Deist. If the

[2] A fact.

beginning of strife is as the letting out of water, the loosening of one stone in the foundation of the revelation on which our faith is built, must end in the destruction of our belief entirely, or at least in such a weakening of the structure as to make us uncertain of the strength of any portion of it.

The time had now arrived when Henry's course at Bunyan College was complete. He had taken his M.A. degree at the London University, to which the College was affiliated, as we said, and it only now remained for him to find a vacant pulpit wherein to exercise his sacred calling. And such an one was found for him at the village of Risworth, a pretty and romantic spot in the North of Devonshire. Thither he removed at the pressing invitation of the good people who had often heard him preach, and who were desirous to have him as their minister, for the moderate sum of 100*l.* a year. Lucy was delighted that at last there was a prospect of a comfortable, quiet, and settled home, where she could help her brother in his work. So as little pressing was necessary to induce Henry to enter upon his calling, the spring of 18— saw him a real Reverend, with a chapel of his own, and a flock to provide for.

CHAPTER XIX.

EXPLORING.

Two years have passed since Henry settled at Risworth, a Baptist pastor, full of high aspirations, noble thoughts, strong and brave desires to sternly fight against ignorance and sin, God's battle of the

right and true. To the work he brought learning, piety, zeal, and devotion. He was armed from head to foot with all his tutors thought necessary to fit him for the conflict, and as he stepped forward full of hope and heart, warm with desire to do valiantly, he thought he lacked nothing to make him successful. There was, however, an unsound place in his armour; there was an uncovered spot between the harness joints, a mere crevice, but yet a crevice; and that uncovered spot was a lurking doubt. Not worth noticing, you would have said, but there it was. Dr. Smith would have passed it over, even if you had pointed it out to him; indeed, if you had put the whole armour up to the light, you would have found more than one place that was unsound, but nobody would have thought it worth while to trouble about it; indeed it would have puzzled the whole staff of Bunyan to have found a much better suit.

Yes, to change the figure, the seeds of doubt had been implanted unconsciously in the young student's mind, during his residence at college. He had learned unduly to exalt human reason; he had learned to criticize everything, no article of the creed excepted, and what to his frail and weak understanding did not commend itself, he thought he might reject. He entered on his ministerial career then, rather as a theological adventurer, than as one divinely commissioned to preach and teach what he was fully assured men ought to believe and know.

These doubts had grown till, at the time we write of, Henry's faith was all but choked by them. He was in himself strangely altered; he had become almost lost in thought; he seemed an abstracted being. Lucy wondered how it was her brother could not go on believing as she did, without worrying his mind by

curious questions, and distressing himself with theological misgivings. The people noticed the change; he did not preach as he formerly did. Not that Henry carried his difficulties into the pulpit; he was still the implacable enemy of sin, some sins—he forgot, poor man, none was blacker than unbelief. Immorality! oh, yes, he would have had men pure as angels, who dared call themselves Christians; for the human side of the Divine teacher's character was, alas! now, all he could proclaim.

The Risworth folk were good, quiet people, not cants like the Merlingtonians, or Henry would have given it a wide berth. They were old-fashioned Dissenters he ministered to, partly Independents and partly Baptists, for as there was only one Nonconformist place of worship in the village, they agreed, simple people, to sink their differences, and make the one chapel do for their spiritual wants. Not that Henry christened the babies. No, this he could not consent to; so the ceremony, when necessary, had to be performed by one of the deacons.

The people noticed a change, daily more marked, coming over their pastor. As the old clerk used to shake his head and say, "The trumpet gave an uncertain sound." Merlington would have voted that the pastor did not feed them, and have looked out for another shepherd; but Risworth did not put itself out of the way much on this account.

Henry worked hard amongst his people. He gave them lectures on Bible history; he had classes for teaching the elder Sunday scholars Greek; he performed chemical experiments in the schoolroom, and started various Branch associations for the benefit of the people. Lucy slightly improved in health with the Western air, and did incredible quantities of work

for the poor. They were both the idols of the people for their goodness; but that there was something wrong in the pulpit it was absurd to doubt. Gradually, there came over Henry a want of decision in his theological expressions, an uncertainty as to what he really believed on important points of the Christian faith, and an evident dislike to venture on any other than purely moral and social topics in his preaching.

There was a cause for this, and the cause was that Henry was fast losing his faith. One day—it was on the completion of the second year of his stay at Risworth—he was writing to one of his old college friends, who was located in London; and as he wrote sheet after sheet Lucy sat working by his side watching the rapid pen pouring out words of vigour on the paper, that must have had their fountain in the very depths of the writer's soul. She watched the strong expression of her brother's face as he wrote, and how he seemed to be putting his very self into the letter; and when he threw down his pen at last, and leaned his head on his hand as in deepest thought, she spoke to him in her tenderest way, and said—

"Harry, tell Sissy what you write about? Is it a sermon?"

He started—his face flushed—his eyes brightened—he sprang to his feet, as with a sudden inspiration. Lucy was alarmed, and wondered what it all meant.

"A sermon! Yes! as well first as last! It shall be a sermon."

The young minister sank into his seat, buried his face in his hands on the desk, and burst into tears.

His astonished sister did all she could to quiet him; but feared just then to press him more closely, as to the cause of his excitement. The truth was, she had long been anxious about her brother; he

read longer and more closely every day. He grew more serious, pale, and thin; lines were forming in his forehead, that was smooth when he came to Risworth. She used to think it was the anxiety consequent on an endeavour adequately to fulfil the very exalted notion he had of what a minister's duties should be to his people. But of late she began to fear from expressions he had dropped at various times, and from remarks he had made in the pulpit, that theological questions agitated him, and that doubts were racking his sensitive mind.

A few minutes sufficed to abate the storm that swept the waters of Henry's soul; and telling Lucy that he was a foolish fellow to behave so, and assuring her he was not unwell but a little worried, he tried to parry her questions as to the cause of the little outburst. Poor fellow! he was unwilling to let Lucy into his secrets—for what have women to do with abstract questions in divinity or philosophy? theirs is work of another kind. Men go star-gazing, while women busy themselves in clothing the naked and feeding the hungry; and God is doubtless better served by those who help to till His vineyard, than by those who seek to penetrate His counsels and fathom His secrets, in the vain hope of finding out what He has wisely hidden from human ken.

But Lucy would not be put off thus; she insisted on reading what Henry was busy upon when he became so disturbed, and half unwillingly he granted her request to peruse the last sheet of what he had written and declared should be a sermon. She took the paper, resumed her seat, and read as follows:—

* * * "Yes, Lawson, God only knows what I have suffered these last few months; it must come to a

climax, I can conceal it no longer. What shall I do? Shall I tell my people at once, as Watson did? It is horrible to be living on the poor, simple people, and taking their money, to teach them what I am in doubt about. You know how fond we used to be of Unitarian theology at Bunyan. Did you not tell me, sooner or later I must come to laugh at the 'orthodox' notion of the Trinity? It has come at last. Would to God I had never begun to———. No! I won't say that. The pursuit of truth is the most glorious occupation a man can have. As for the body, so for the soul, freedom above everything is to be fought for, and too long we have been the slaves of religious conservatism. But it is an agony to have to address an unknown God in prayer. Oh for the simple faith of the time when I said 'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,' at my mother's side!

"Poor old Deacon Spiller said to me the other day, after sermon, 'How is it, sir, you never address our Saviour in the public prayer?' I was confounded, and put him off with a mean excuse, for which I afterwards felt ashamed; for I remembered that gradually I had come to pray to Jehovah, and could no longer recognize a Trinity in Unity. I feel it is idolatry to do otherwise. Not that my reverence for the Greatest of all Teachers is abated, rather it increases as I come to realize the human view; but in my heart I feel that Romanists who pray to Mary and the Saints, are not much more deluded than Trinitarians who address *The Messiah*. Not that I can accept the raw definition of either English or American Unitarians on the question. No; the more refined and subtle philosophy of the German school better pleases me. But why do I ramble on thus? You have passed through it all; I am only setting out on the

voyage of discovery, and the shore of old 'orthodoxy' is still in sight. You are a more advanced explorer, and can sympathize with the poor emigrant as he parts from *terra firma*, to voyage on the sea of unrest. But it must be. So away with the anchor! No longer pin I my faith to aught I cannot prove, and with sails filled with zeal for truth—Truth! glorious pole-star of the thinker! I cast my fortunes on the waters, seeking for——for what? Alas, my heart sinks again, and my sails flap idly at the mast. Oh, God, have pity on a mind torn with a thousand doubts! Is anything certain? Shall I be sure I have reached the continent, if I ever see land again? Where is all this to end? Yesterday I wandered in a lane hard by, and my heart was sad as I thought of the simplicity of my early youth, when I knew *what* I believed, without asking *why*; and I essayed to pray, and then something whispered in my soul, *To whom?* to the Jewish Divinity, Jehovah? To Zeus? To ——, and I sat down behind a hedge, and from my bursting heart poured forth an agonizing cry to the Great Spirit all men acknowledge, though his name be hidden—a prayer a pagan might have prayed—and I a Christian minister, a Baptist pastor!

"No, I must leave this place; I must tell my poor people I cannot stay to teach them what I am uncertain about myself. I know what you will say. You will tell me to do as you have done; take my people with me in my travels after truth. I cannot do this. I cannot gradually undermine their simple trust in the Bible. Our congregations are widely different. You have an intellectual body of people, readers, thinkers; they can follow you in your researches; now German metaphysics, however well adapted for a city congregation, would be out of place in a village like

this. Besides, I don't know exactly how it is, the poor and illiterate don't thrive on theological abstractions, they want 'Gospel comfort,' as they call it, poor things! Well, I have thought over this now for months, and have said no word about it to any one, not even to Lucy; but I shall do it, I know I shall, before long. I shall give up the ministry till I am more settled in my mind. This is hard to do, for I love the work, and love my people. It is a glorious calling to try to make men better, to teach them——Ah, what can I teach them? 'If the blind lead the blind——' I am like the desert traveller fooled by the mirage. Is anything *true?*"

Here Henry had dropped his pen when Lucy interrupted him, and here it was he had determined to tell the congregation next Sunday that he could conscientiously no longer remain their minister. It was at this point the idea struck him to embody the views he had been expressing to his friend on the uncertainty of all human knowledge, and especially in theology, in a sermon, when he could explain his reasons for withdrawing from the ministry for awhile, until he had become more settled.

Lucy read the dreadful letter with unfeigned horror. To her simple mind it was nothing but the rankest infidelity, and sad as it seemed for her brother to have to abandon his chosen profession a second time, she could do no other, honest and ingenuous as she was, than advise him to withdraw from his false position. As we have seen, it was getting wind that the young minister was growing rationalistic; it was only his devotedness and goodness that endeared him to the flock; his preaching had lately come to be regarded with extreme suspicion by the elder portion of the congregation. Now all was explained; still, Lucy

with her womanly common sense, and her unphilosophical ideas, could not see the use of blasting all his ministerial prospects by openly proclaiming himself an infidel or a sceptic—the terms were all the same to Lucy. She counselled him for the people's sake, for the scandal it would otherwise be to religion, as well as on his own account, to act more prudently, and simply resign the pastorate. There was no obstacle to this course, as by the death of a rich uncle, they had lately come into sufficient property to enable them to live in a quiet way, independently.

But young ministers like to be heroic, especially when they become possessed of *Progress* principles and Pursuit-of-Truth ideas; and Henry, it must be confessed, having fallen into a ditch himself was anxious for company in the slough. It is ever so.

He posted the letter he had written to his fellow-student, and received an answer ere the week was out. One pregnant sentence from his worldly-wise correspondent ran thus:—"Your case is in no way different from that of thousands of thinking men, the vulgar herd alone being content with tradition and the old paths; remember, if you would be an explorer, you must be content to share the troubles of an exile's life. Read the essay I send you on the 'Education of the World,' it is by Albert Wells your old friend; your letter reminded me of some passages in it. You ask my advice—I give it you. Don't abandon the ministry. Leave Risworth; a truth-seeker wants companions, and your people cannot be dragged up to your level; you want an intellectual congregation to sympathize with your difficulties and to pursue your studies with you. The Risworth folk are unworthy of you, don't stay; any fool can attend to their bucolic intellects. It is for *you* to lead *men* and influence *minds*."

The Demon of Darkness in the character of a moral "Will of the Wisp" was leading poor Henry to his destruction. Not more anxious the benighted traveller to find his lost road, when he follows the deceitful gleam that entices him to his death, than this truth-seeker following the Spirit of Lies disguised as an Angel of Light. Unhappy man, he knew not then of the pole-star whose guidance was infallible; with all his learning, he could not read the heavens enough for that.

He read the essay, and ere he had concluded the perusal, resolved to quit Risworth and abandon himself to the search for truth.

It was hard for Lucy to leave the good people, and the pretty village and its work behind, but she felt Henry must be unfettered in his course of action, and it was little she could do for him in his trouble, but pray and hope. So Risworth fades from our story.

CHAPTER XX.

BENIGHTED.

THEY went to London. Henry would have a holiday, and wait awhile ere he looked out for more work. Of course his friends were astonished at his leaving; all sorts of reasons were imagined and given out for the step. For his own part he was little disposed to satisfy them as to the real cause. Dr. Smith, however, must know; it was useless to conceal it from him. It was the old story. He was not the least surprised, though he affected to be; he was used to

defection. It was discouraging, certainly, to train men who so persistently carried his mild, timid teaching to its logical consequences. It was bad enough to be always expelling men for downright immorality, it was worse when the men of real principle or sterling worth constantly left the Baptist faith, becoming Independents, Churchmen, and not unfrequently downright Sceptics. It was the old story; they all began by "truth-seeking," and ended by denying everything it was the object of his college to teach. It was causing him the most intense anxiety, for he feared it was partly his own fault, and he feared the outside world, especially the supporters of the college, would find it out. Of course it was concealed as much as possible. It never appeared in the annual report. Nothing was said of it at Exeter Hall. It was only whispered about in the college itself. When the first year men heard about it, they trembled and were indignant. When the second year men heard of it, they were puzzled but not quite so angry. The third year men looked at one another significantly but did not say much, it was evident they were not surprised. The men in their last year openly sympathized with the outcasts; some wondered when their turn would come, for they seemed to feel it would end by being their fate. They shuddered a little at the thought of the isolation they would have to suffer, but they felt it was a noble thing to dare so much for truth, and wrote kindly words to them accordingly. So one by one, the Principal having reared his brood, found it leaving him unthanked, and by some despised. Such is ever the fate of those who attempt to teach without dogma.

Darker and still more dark grew the mental history of our young minister. It is easy to talk of leaving

the ship when the sea is calm, and one is satiated with the society of men; it is altogether another thing when out alone on the waste of waters in the gloom of night, when the storm is rising and you know you have neither compass, nor anchor, nor food, nor hope. Such was his fate, alas! not that of the first of his class by many. The condition of such an one is very peculiar; cut adrift from his fellows, virtually if not actually out of communion with his sect, he had no companions, for he could join no other. He knew of no sect he could ever think of joining; he knew of no companions who exactly held his opinions. Some were more advanced than he, others had not ventured so far yet; he was alone, and daily the sense of his loneliness grew more painful. He gave up prayer. To pray, one must have a concrete idea of a Supernatural Being. You can't pray to an abstraction. It was no new thing to him, the idea of a prayerless life. He was appalled when he heard a very advanced companion at college declare openly he had given up long ago "the absurd practice of flopping on his knees night and morning against his bed, and praying to the counterpane." He knew many who ridiculed the idea of prayer altogether, it was unscientific, possibly harmless, but certainly useless. So when he came to rise without seeking God's blessing on the day, and to go to rest without asking God's pardon on the sins he had committed, he only behaved as an "advanced" man always behaved, and felt accordingly he was being qualified for the title.

The destructive school of philosophy had completed the undoing of Pattison, once the ardent and enthusiastic worker for God, as far as his light went, in the homes and haunts of sin and misery; and what had it given him for the peace of mind, ay, the pure

joys it had robbed him of? What had he become! Was he a fit teacher of men; was this the state of mind in which to call men to higher and nobler things than self and the world? A fine standpoint this from which to effect the amelioration of the human race!

How often deep down in his heart he lamented he had not been born a ploughman, a neat-herd, with no soul above the simple faith he possessed as a child. Then he would rouse himself and say with Tennyson over and over again—

> "There is more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds."

Ah, yes, this is all very well for yourself, Mr. Henry, but then how about your miserable fellow-creatures that you have got to ameliorate, you know? How often you have told yourself you have a mission! Ay, and have proved it too! Sinners have heard and obeyed your call to virtue; the drunkard, the groveller in low and mean vices, has turned under your instruction *ad meliora*, has set to work to climb the heavenly way, and his Excelsior is delighting the angels, while you, poor Henry, are speculating whether you can or cannot get as far as your "Credo in unum Deum!" This is a fall indeed. Well, you have *honesty* and you have *earnestness*. You are good at bottom, my hero. God will not let you perish. You are vain and silly, poor man, and when you have got to the darkest point, light will begin to dawn.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE STORM.

HE was too active to live an idle life, some work he must do; preach he could not, the very thought of a pulpit was horrible to him. Some literary work he must do, so he obtained it with an old friend on a very "advanced" Review that had just been started, and this filled up his time very well. He was not altogether miserable, for had he not Lucy—Lucy whom as his own soul he loved? Dear Lucy that so silently noticed all his trouble and could do so little to help him, she was so weak against those doubts and mental difficulties of his. How often she would take his hand, and look into his eyes, and pray, oh, so earnestly, that God who was very near and very real to her, would help him over his difficulties and give him light at last. He loved her simple faith, is it not ever so? We always look up to and reverence the better, though we follow the worse! Ah, Lucy, you did a very great deal more to help the wanderer than you thought. You never knew how many a brilliant and startling passage in some of the latest anti-Christian books he read, your sweet, trusting, loving, religious life served to secretly neutralize. We don't know a hundredth part of the forces that influence secretly and silently our modes of thought, our actions, and our principles, though we fancy we rule them as we will. So Lucy was the one grain of salt that preserved his soul from utter decay.

While he had her, he had one friend to whom he could open his heart and be sure to find sympathy; and so for months he went on, doubting and wonder-

ing if after all there would be rest for the sole of his weary foot. He wrote and read but no light came, and having no longer faith, grew peevish and easily vexed with the cares of life.

"Without God and without hope in the world," without the softening influence of religion, without the soothing healing balm of prayer, was it wonderful that he grew morose, cynical, hypercritical, caustic, and severe? He was no longer the gentle, loving teacher of men, he ventilated his ever shifting opinions in his paper; there he photographed the last phase of his varying thought, and strove to make his readers as restless as himself. And now, having erased one clause after another from the creed of his earlier days, he found it was the task of Sisyphus to replace them with fresh. Is it not wonderful that the masters of the destructive art, should in matters of religion be esteemed by the world more highly than the master spirits who have constructed for us a system of theology that all the infidel forces will never uproot? As though we should praise the destroyer of the Temple of Diana, and think nothing of its architect. Yet so it is; let a man rise up and show the world a sufficiently plausible reason why he should reject for himself and his fellows an article of our faith, and straightway the world runs after him, and his name is written high on their fame roll.

From a merry, cheerful man, Henry Pattison had become a melancholy, distracted creature. Living without prayer, yet yearning after God; doubting everything, yet longing to believe; despising every kind of dogma, yet burning to give himself heart and soul to a faith that should be strong enough and God-like enough to clasp him and carry him eagle-like aloft; such was the hero of our tale. Are there not many

whose eyes shall scan this page, whose hearts beat with sympathy for his condition at this time? Look at your scars received in that battle with unbelief which was well nigh your overthrow; at your wounded feet scarcely healed yet, injured in that wandering over thorns and briars, when scorning direction and antiquated ideas you waywardly struck out into the devious paths of error—remembering these things you may pity Henry. Though he had cut himself adrift from all connexion with religious bodies or churches, he did not cease to attend some place of worship on Sundays. Frequently he was an attendant at the Unitarian chapels, but more usually the ministrations of a semi-Socinian Independent clergyman claimed his attention. This gentleman was introducing a rather ornate style of service that bids fair to prove a success amongst Dissenters. Our museums and our increased taste for music and art have combined to introduce an æsthetic feeling amongst Dissenters, who would be very unwilling to allow that symbolism and ceremonial were true exponents of faith. So the religion of the Beautiful, came to supersede the worship of God in Henry's soul, and he became a mere pagan philosophizer. We may imagine he was ill-prepared to meet the affliction God was bringing upon him. His chastening hand had let him run the length of his tether, it was the time now to arrest his wanderings. When the leaves began to fall and the misty mornings of the Autumn of 18— came, Lucy grew alarmingly worse, her health began to fail visibly before all their eyes. Once the thought occurred to Henry, "*Oh, if I were to lose her.*" He dismissed the idea as soon as it was formed, he put it from him as something that *should* not happen; "Not that," he said, "anything but that!"

The best advice that could be procured had always been obtained for her. Dr. Haslam, in whose judgment they all had confidence, was attending her. He was one who bluntly told the truth without disguise.

"What is your opinion of my sister?" said Henry, after his last examination was concluded. "Tell me plainly, is she in danger?"

"My friend," was the reply, "you cannot count upon her living through the present winter!"

Still he would not believe he must lose her, though hour by hour he saw her fading from him with the shortening days. She was too necessary for his existence that she should leave him thus. And yet it came—that long-gathering storm of woe; it burst upon him at last as he sat by her dying couch one day. What was to sustain him then? Would the cold philosophy, the sneering cynicism of his later history, make the parting easier than the faith that had helped him in his youth? Would his pretty theories on the usefulness of suffering and the spirit of self-sacrifice heal his breaking heart? No! he felt there was nothing to stem the tide of sorrow, no breakwater to turn aside its force—and he rebelled. If yet there were some remnants of his religion left, they served but to enable him to look heavenward and refuse to submit! And here it was he found the depth of his sorrow. "I am smitten in anger, not in love; my trouble is more than I can bear; I have not deserved it; there is no good end in it; I cannot accept it as from a Father's hand. My God is my enemy!" And so despair came nearer to him day by day; and Lucy saw it—saw how dear she was to him—and knew she must leave him helpless in his woe.

The death-day came at last. Every day of late, and

nearly all day he had been at her side. How she preached to him by her sweet patience—her resignation to God's holy will—and though she never reproached him in words for his defection from religion, her virtues, as her illness manifested them more grandly, pleaded with him to return.

"I am a weak and simple girl," said she; "all unused to scholar's talk and the philosophy you love, I cannot argue with you, for you would laugh at my weak reasonings; but, Henry dear, you will have to see me die, and if I had not the faith you have abandoned, I tell you in the face of death I *dare not* die! Yet I await my end without alarm other than is the common lot of mortals. I grieve that ever I offended my God, who has given Himself for me. I implore His pardon, and clinging to His cross, and sprinkled with His precious blood, commend my passing soul to Him who gave it. Henry, dear Henry, it is only as a little child you can live and be at peace with God, it is only as a little child you can dare to face Him who gave you the intellect you are making your idol."

No word of reply could he utter, he knew it was all true; he thought if she might live and teach him he would learn again the way back to the place that he had lost. She died in his arms as night came on. "You will meet me in heaven, won't you, Henry? I am at my journey's end. Come after me! Abandon your books, they lead you from our childhood's faith. You cannot live, you cannot die without it." And thus charging him, her sweet soul passed away, and Henry was crushed to the very earth in his utter sorrow, his utter sense of loss.

For weeks after the funeral he was as one out of the body; he lived and was dead; he wandered below,

yet seemed to be absent from earth; seeking the lost one in the shades, his only thought and hope to reunite his soul with hers. Time, the Assuager, gradually led him back to his former self. Yet no whit resigned nor humbled under the afflicting hand of God. As the assayer heats with ever increasing heat the crucible that holds the metal he must reduce till it yields and flows, so will God do for the soul He loves.

CHAPTER XXII.

AT DARKEST PART OF NIGHT THERE COMES THE DAWN.

WEARILY passed the days with the stricken man, study and his literary work alone supporting him. Just then a new star had arisen amongst the company of preachers, a novelty was the fashion in the Church of England; a young clergyman of wonderful elocutionary power, a charming face, and exquisite voice, had started a monastery and made himself its Superior. Brother Clement, O.S.B. (London), was the rising man now, and all the town was rushing to hear him. Henry had written against him in his paper; he had not yet heard him, so to give greater zest and point to his articles, he must perforce take the opportunity of hearing him preach one Sunday afternoon at St. Michael's Hall. So many who went to hear him embraced his teaching, that Henry jokingly said to the friend who accompanied him, "How droll it would be if Brother Clement made a monk of me." "More improbable things than that," said the other.

It was an audience of earnest thinking men and women, by no means likely to be led astray by unreasonable teaching; decidedly an intellectual audience. So far good. At the appointed time the monk appeared with a few of his followers in the ancient habits that the English had then seldom seen out of pictures. Henry thought it very droll when a good-looking young monk going up the tiers of seats on the platform to play the organ, showed his bare legs under his habit. This was grotesque, but his execution on the instrument atoned for his lack of unmentionables. And then Brother Clement began the service. He said the day was the Feast of the Transfiguration, and the service would be in accord with the festival, that in fact they would sing the vespers of the Sunday, selected from the Latin Breviary. Instead of the ordinary service of the Church of England, it was the Monastic service of the Catholic Church done into English and slightly altered, so as not to shock the prejudices of the congregation too severely. Five Psalms were chanted to exquisite Gregorian melodies, Brother Clement singing in a rich voice a short solo called in ecclesiastical language an Antiphon, before and after each Psalm; this Antiphon gives the key-note to the spirit of the Psalm in its application to the festival. Of course it was quite new to Henry, but the popular form in which the service was cast attracted his attention to every detail. What struck him most was the deep earnestness of the officiant, devoid of anything approaching to cant. He was in matter and style totally unlike any other clergyman of the Establishment he had ever seen. Not less powerful in his mastery over the audience than the Dissenting orators with whom he was familiar, he carried with him a

presence, spoke with a voice, and bore the impress of a refinement that proved him to be what they very seldom were, of gentle birth and University training. These will never be without their special influence over us as Englishmen.

He commenced his sermon, taking for his text the miracle of the raising of the son of the widow of Nain:—"And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother."

Henry thought he preached as though he could inspect his soul, and see through a window in his heart all that was passing in his mind, so exactly was the discourse suited to his taste. The note-book was forgotten, the reporter's pencil dropped from his fingers, the speaker had him spell-bound, the rest of the audience seemed to fade away, and he alone was being wrestled with by the instrument of Christ. He seemed to be holding a private conference for his benefit alone, and Henry hung on his lips, and let not word or accent, look or tone, lose its effect; he was as clay on the potter's wheel. He was the man on the bier, it was he whose spiritual life was *dead*, he who, wrapped in the cerements of infidelity—Godless and hopeless, was a moral corpse. Was it not the death conqueror, Christ himself, who was speaking to him by the preacher's voice, "I say unto thee, Arise"? Was not the same power that accompanied these words at Nain prevailing with him then, stirring in his stiffened limbs, unfastening the bonds of death and giving him new life, and then delivering him to his mother, the Church of God, his lawful nurse, for strengthening and fostering care?

This teaching was new and very strange to Henry; he had never looked upon the Church as anything

but an expression of a vague idea, an invisible, voiceless, unauthoritative thing. He knew his Dissenting friends believed in an invisible something they called the Church, but he knew they repudiated any idea of its having a living voice, an accessible *habitat*, or any authority to teach or command. He had just reached that point when dispirited, heart-sick, and weary, he like some Nile explorer, some Mungo Park baffled and foiled at every turn, had just cast himself on the arid desert to die, one more victim to its mirage. And now there seemed to come a voice out of heaven, like the angel's voice to Hagar in the wilderness, when death had almost made an end of him, saying, "Arise, take up the lad," and, pointing to the healing water of life, for want of which he was perishing, saved him.

Did he pray? Yes, but not in any form of speech, or aught that words could express; but doubtless something went up to heaven far more subtle than words, and passed through its portals when they would, perhaps, have sunk back again to earth, too heavy to reach them at all.

He dismissed his friend, made the best of his way home, shut himself in his room, and mused for an hour and more, wondering what to do next. Rising, he cast his eye along his book-shelves; they seemed to repel him, as strong food is rejected by the fever convalescent. He turned his back on them; but one caught his eye that he had never read, had bought merely as a specimen of good English, Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living;" it was an old copy, 1715, he would look at it, it would be a change and would amuse him for an hour, he thought. The charming style and brilliant thoughts of the old divine vastly took his fancy; he read his quaint advice, and pondered over his beauti-

ful prayers till he *prayed* them while he read, then went on to the chapter on faith, till he came to these words:—"Will you lay your life on it, your estate, your reputation, that the doctrine of Jesus Christ is true in every article?" A great horror seized the man, for he dare not say, "I will!" and dare as little say, "I will not!" So it had come to this, he did not know on whose side he was, and death, perchance, would find him still undecided! And what had Christ done to him that he should turn his back on Him? How had He changed that he should leave Him? Bursting into tears, he fell on his face before God, and asked for help—yet still believed not Christ was God.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"ET INCARNATUS EST."

It was on the morning of the following Sunday, a bright and heavenly morning, that Henry started out to find a church of the Puseyite order, by name St. Matthew, Newington. He had often been told that the services were extremely ritualistic there, that the ceremonies were even Roman, so advanced were they. Now, having the desire so strong he could not repress it, to know a little more about the teaching of that "Mother" of whom the monk had spoken; he thought he might learn what he wanted if he went thither. He had a Book of Common Prayer, and knew fairly well how to use it; he reached the church as the service of Holy Communion was being celebrated with considerable pomp; the clergy were using incense, and he was not repelled; they were in

gorgeous vestments, and strange to say, he saw nothing inappropriate in their use; he felt very earnest, powerfully led by something that was working within and around him, leading him he knew not *whither*, but *rightly* he was sure. They commenced to chant to a severe yet most beautiful melody, a confession of faith, the creed "Nicene:" they were standing, priests and people facing the communion table. Grandly the march of Christian doctrines proceeded, till suddenly at the words, "Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, *And was made man*," the whole congregation, priests and people, knelt reverently down, with bowed heads and slow and solemn song. At that sacred moment, Henry was seized with a great and overwhelming repentance for his horrible blasphemy in speaking and believing against the divinity of Jesus Christ, the God-man, Very God of very God.

In the self-same instant that the involuntary tears of sorrow for his infidelity came from his stricken heart, while he knelt (for he could not have helped kneeling, so pressed was he by some mighty power without him), the doubts he had admitted and entertained concerning Him whom they were adoring, vanished from his soul, as the mist rolls from the hill-top before the driving wind, and unveils the sun behind it.

The Spirit of God had chosen that time and place, at once and for ever, to crush the Arian heresy in the unhappy man. No learned arguments nor tongue of orator, no syllogism, no proof-passages from Scripture or Fathers, but the simple unvarnished statement of the great dogma, the centre round which revolves the whole Christian doctrine—"Et incarnatus est," *and*

was incarnate—sufficed, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, to obliterate there and then, and for the rest of his life, all that he had learned, and thought, and elaborated in his own mind against the divinity of the Saviour; and he who knelt an unbeliever arose a Christian.

It was as much as he could do to conceal his profound emotion from the people near him. He ardently wished himself alone in that church, that he might yield himself to the softening influence of the benignant spirit of grace that was melting his stubborn, vain, hard heart, and bringing him by a way he knew not to the truth as it is in Jesus.

Happy, thrice happy Henry! He had entered that hour on the path that should lead him to high and noble things, to peace and rest, calm, untroubled repose, from the distress of soul to which he had long been the prey.

Not that this result was obtained immediately. Grace, like Nature, is usually slow in its operations. Ripe fruits do not burst out with the early leaves in spring, and the work to be done in Henry's soul had as much need as they of the winds and rains and scorching heat, of agitating thoughts, of repentant tears, of fiery trials, that rightly borne make the perfect convert to the faith. So lost was he before the great mystery to which he had been converted, that he did not heed how the service was going till the choir began to sing with angelic sweetness the anthem, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God!"

This he could say with truth, for never in his darkest day had he ceased to seek communion with the Supreme; but now the figure was so applicable to his state, it seemed as though the service had been

composed on his account. Thirsty and weary, hunted by heresies and doubts and cares, he panted for the "living water" to taste, to drink a life-giving draught of, never to thirst again! Thus musing, as one half in a trance, the time passed till the current of his meditation was turned into another channel. The clear voices of the white-robed choristers were singing "O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us!" and then the sacrificial nature of Christ's work was brought before his awakening mind, and, in a prayer that went to heaven's gate, winged with new-born faith and sped with agonizing earnestness, he cried that *Kyrie eleison* that was heard ere fairly uttered.

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The service was over, the wreathing circles of incense had melted in the carved work of the roof, leaving behind a savour symbolical of that which the beautiful service had left in his soul. The soothing notes of the organ died away, but the music died not from his happy heart. He rose; the people bowed to the altar; he did the same; he would have liked to have kissed the pavement and embraced the stones on which his tears had fallen. This was no ritualism taught by diagrams or settled by canons; it was but the index of that which was burning within, the throes of the new birth, the sacred joy of returning life.

He left the building. Did he care to look at the outside? He did. He stood and looked long at the plain, severe brick architecture. It had more interest to him than minsters or basilica of fame; it was the place where the angels had set a ladder between his soul and heaven.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DAYBREAK.

No figure will so aptly describe the mental condition of the man of whom we write as that of the daybreak. This is the prince of similes—the oldest and most universal; the foundation of multitudinous myths and the theme of the poets from the Northern Seas to the remotest East. We need no excuse for using the figure, for it can never become hackneyed. While the world lasts the sunrise will be the type of joy and the dawning day—the aptest figure of mental progress. Reared with no settled or scientific basis for the religion he was told to profess, with no fixed principles of belief, with no foundation for the "opinions" he and his fellow-dissenters held that could bear for an instant the test of logical examination, his scepticism was simply the natural consequence of the system in which he had been nurtured.

If men were not so much "better than their creed" the heresies of the Christian world would have made more havock of faith and morals than they have. Henry had proved, again and again, that to begin to *think* was for a Dissenter to take the first step towards utter scepticism. So weak, so rotten, so utterly unscientific and illogical are the foundations on which their religious belief rests, that their colleges, their theological seminaries, are simply the very hot-beds of infidelity and the nurseries of negation and destructive philosophy. And so because he had dared to think, he had lost all faith; he was as a dweller in an Eastern house built on piles, who going down to the deep foundations to examine their strength, had found

them pierced and hollowed by the destructive white ant that eats away the whole inner substance and leaves but the outward show of strength behind; and knowing that at the first rude shock of question or of doubt the superstructure must fall, he had left the dangerous shelter, and was just a houseless, homeless, weather-beaten wanderer in consequence. The storm had met him, the tempest had done its worst upon him, and the night had found him as it finds the bravest of the homeless and the lonely—despairing. If the monk's voice speaking Heaven's message, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise," was as the streaks of early light across the Eastern sky, the chanting of the Nicene Creed at St. Matthew's was the rosy dawn that roused him from his heavy sleep and set him on his feet. There was no warmth in the day as yet, the promise only of the coming day was there, the darkness seemed only disturbed, not dispelled, the gloom and shadows were still oppressive; but just as the husbandman by the fingers of Aurora is bidden to his work, so did the man of our story heed the call, for he knew that the light had come at last to enable him to pursue his *search.* "Arise, for it is day," not noon-day for food and rest and joy, but daybreak for *work.* And if "Laborare est orare" is true, not less true often is the converse "Orare est laborare," "To pray is to work." He therefore fell to prayer, he knew he had another home to seek, he knew his religious training had hitherto been false, not that there was not some good in it, but that there must be, *where* he knew not, some better exponent of Christianity; some nobler and worthier representative of Christ's teaching than were either the Baptist, the Independent, or the Unitarian Faiths, whose tenets and whose teachings he was

familiar with and had found unsafe. Bracing himself for the earnest work before him, and strengthened by prayer and confidence that the petition "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief" would certainly be heard, he sought by books and inquiry to know more and more of the teaching of the Tractarian School of the Church of England.

He considered, rightly or wrongly, that the doctrines of that Church were more literally and logically set forth by the Puseyites than by the Evangelical party, and had frequently heard Boanerges say that none of the latter could be honest, as they ought to be Dissenters on their own showing, whilst the Puseyites could at least appeal to the Prayer-book in support of their teaching.

Reading and thinking, therefore, of these things brought round another Sunday, bright oases in the desert they were to him now. He felt that, though Lucy was with him no more, to help him with her sweet sympathy, she was walking with him, and watching over him, knowing the truth herself now, and drawing him to God by the strong bonds of her goodness and love. A subduing sense of his manifest helplessness and the softening influence of sorrow was bringing him to the plastic condition of humility necessary for the reception of the shape the heavenly potter would have his mind assume. It was, as we said, Sunday morning and again he was at St. Matthew's. It was eleven o'clock, the hour at which they celebrated in the presence of the whole congregation the "Communion Service." It was the custom at that hour every Sunday to perform this service with the greatest solemnity, the communicants and the non-communicants together assisting at the devotional part of the ceremony; this though strange

to a member of the Low Church school, was nothing unusual to a Dissenter. Any persons who choose can witness the celebration of the Lord's Supper, on such occasions as it is solemnized, and, in fact, they are urgently invited to do so.

Moreover, a person who is in communion with any "*Christian*" Church can usually partake of the "ordinance" with either the Baptists or Independents. Now, from the invitation read by the officiating priest from the Book of Common Prayer, he understood he was invited to participate in the "Heavenly feast of the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ." Standing at the altar the celebrant said in a loud and clear voice, "Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in His holy ways; draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees."

He felt he could not stay away, it was right that he should, stranger to their ways though he was, go to that railing, and kneeling, receive the Sacrament from their hands; he saw only just the next step before him, nothing beyond; this he felt led to, and praying "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief," he went and received the sacred symbols, resolving afterwards to place himself in correspondence with the clergy.

The service concluded, he made bold to inquire of one of the door-keepers if it was possible just then to see one of the clergymen. "Nothing easier," said the man, and he was conducted to the house adjoining the church, and forthwith introduced to "Father Layton," who was in his study, dispensing

from a large tin canister some sweetmeats to several choir-boys, who seemed to treat him with a loving yet familiar respect that was gratifying to see. While making up the little parcels of sweets, and saying kind things to the boys, he, with a grace that was peculiarly his own, turned his handsome, intellectual face towards Henry, and told him he should be at his service in a moment. The ex-Baptist had never been in a room so curiously decorated before, and the few minutes' delay gave him the opportunity to glance round the apartment, ere the interview with the clergyman commenced. Over the mantel hung a large crucifix, on the shelf were several statuettes beautifully painted representing Our Saviour bound for the scourging, the Virgin Mother with the Holy Child in her arms, and St. Joseph the foster-father of Christ. Several pictures hung in Oxford frames on the walls, representing scenes from the life of Jesus, and many other objects of religious art, such as he had hitherto beheld only in Catholic chapels.

The boys dismissed, Father Layton soon placed Henry at his ease. A gentleman does this so easily, a Chadband or a Stiggins, strive how he may, never does.

Briefly he told him why he came, that he was anxious to be taught Christianity *ab initio*, he had fallen into deadly errors, was seeking the truth, and brought his mind as a *tabula rasa* to the task. Would he tell him what to do next?

Asking him a few questions as to his religious training, and telling him point-blank that "Catholic truth" was the one thing needful for him, he said he would enter on a series of instructions with him, and appointed a time to commence the work.

"Remember, dear fellow," said he, "there are just

now two armies, each engaged in deadly conflict, infidelity and the devil on one side, and God and the Catholic Church on the other; under one or other of these standards the world is assembling; the sects are being absorbed by one or other, and there is no rational, logical standpoint now-a-days, but to be an infidel or a Catholic. Choose you this day whom ye will serve, God or Baal!"

A heavenly fire lit up the deep lustrous eyes of the speaker; standing erect in his long black cassock, speaking earnestly, manfully, like an Englishman and an Oxford man as he was, he gained the sympathetic heart of the ex-Baptist, and won him as some men can their fellows, by that indefinable something, that by its absence or its presence repels or attracts, we know not why.

"I will be here on Wednesday at three o'clock."

"You will find me awaiting you," replied the clergyman; "God bless you; pray on. All will be well with you, ere long."

He left the place, feeling that he had a friend, a man to whom he could open his heart; a warm, whole-souled man in whom cant and slimy hypocrisy could no more live than the unclean bird without carrion to feed on. This was the man to teach him. He should be his Gamaliel.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE A. B. C. OF CHRISTIANITY.

As the clock struck three on Wednesday afternoon, Henry was ascending the staircase of the Clergy-

house of St. Matthew, Newington. It was not difficult to gain admittance. You didn't require to send in your card by a boy in buttons or a smart maid. You were not kept waiting in an elegant sitting-room, while the minister's wife or the clergyman's daughter speculated what you wanted with papa, and made you wish you hadn't bothered the man at all whom it was so difficult to see.

No; you just pulled a common iron bell-handle that hung conveniently at your side. No elegant portico with half a dozen whitened steps, which you were afraid to sully with your dirty boots; no plate inviting you to knock a ponderously ornamental knocker, and ring a magnificent and solemn-sounding bell. You gained admittance without any trouble, and were received without any ceremony. It was wonderful! You went up the staircase, and there were no stair-carpets; you passed no matrons in silk attire, who looked afraid you had come to borrow money of the parson, and therefore joined you in the interview to see that you did not succeed. Evidently no ladies were here, the clergy were all celibates. It certainly was much more comfortable for Henry, for he could not have opened his mind before Mrs. Proudie for the life of him.

"I am so glad you are come. Now where shall we begin? I am so anxious to see you a good Churchman."

Henry declared that he would like nothing better than to be taught Church doctrine just as a child would learn it.

"Then I shall read to you the Apostles' Creed; and as you say you no longer doubt the divinity of our dear Lord, I shall give you my instructions from these sentences only:—'I believe in the Holy Ghost; The

Holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting.' Now, I don't care what else you may have believed while you were a Dissenter, this you never rightly believed or understood —the Person and work of the Holy Spirit—so I shall talk a little about that. Of course I do not mean that you have not a great reverence for the third person in the Blessed Trinity; but you have not, neither have your party, any right faith in the Holy Ghost, the Giver of Life, or you could not cut yourselves off from the true Catholic Church in which He abides, which He teaches and sustains. You know our Lord promised to send the Holy Spirit to guide the Church into all truth. Now, as you Dissenters are split up into many scores of sects, you cannot each and every one of you have been guided into all truth; for God is not the author of confusion, but of order. You have some of the truth with you, but not *all truth;* that is possessed only by the Catholic Church."

At this point Henry interrupted the speaker by demanding to know what he meant by the *Catholic Church?*

"I mean the English, Greek, and Roman sister Churches. The Catholic Church, rather, in its three branches."

"Do you really mean to say that you own the Roman Church as part of the true Church?"

"Oh, certainly," said the speaker, with some evident confusion. "She is our sister though in error."

Our hero being given to humour could not help saying, "Rather, if the Church of England is your mother, and the Roman Church is her sister, she must be your aunt."

Slightly offended at this banter, Father Layton tried to explain that the Catholic Church assumed in England the aspect of the Establishment, in France the Roman, and in Russia the Greek form; and the three combined made up the visible Catholic Church of East and West.

"But they do not more agree with each other than do we Dissenters amongst ourselves. Where then is the unity you claim?" "It is real though not apparent," said the other, "for see! we hold the same creeds —the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian. We use almost the same Liturgy, hold the same sacraments, and have the same orders. It is only in minor and unimportant matters that we differ." The neophyte thought things were getting serious, when he was openly told that the differences between the English and Romish Churches were unimportant. So they argued the question till it was time to close the interview.

In a week, Pattison found himself once more listening to the instructions of the Puseyite, whose standpoint was the following proposition, made up by connecting the latter clauses of the Apostles' Creed:— "*I believe in the Holy Ghost*, who abides in, teaches, animates, and sustains *the Holy Catholic Church*, in which is found *the Communion of Saints*—saints in heaven with those on earth—in which, by the sacrament of confession, is to be had *the Forgiveness of sins*, in consequence of which we partake in the *Resurrection of the body to the Life everlasting*."

Certainly, strung together in this manner, the isolated propositions assumed a new and a more intelligible form than they had ever presented before to the mind of the inquirer, and he confessed the reasonableness of the clergyman's line of argument. "Still," said he, "if the Roman Church is not in deadly error, and she

cannot be if you call her sister, how came you to break off from her at the Reformation? it seems to me if you are right, *a fortiori* the Church of Rome is still more right!"

"We say," replied the priest, "that the Church of Rome has no authority in England, that we are an independent Church, that we did not break away from her at the Reformation, but that she cast *us* off. At the same time, if you wish to examine the Roman side of the question, do so now, before you go farther and join us; for many cause scandals by uniting themselves to the Church of England and then leaving us for that of Rome, having made of us a mere stepping-stone from Dissent to Romanism. This we do not want; so take my advice and first investigate Roman Catholicism, then if you can join us, and be a faithful son of the Church, do so; but if you prefer the other, do not make of us a half-way house."

Now here was Henry all at sea again. The idea of Rome and its priests sent a thrill of horror through his veins; he had never spoken to a Catholic priest, and felt much disinclined to do so. He begged, therefore, to be allowed to continue his conferences at St. Matthew's, as he could not bring himself to desert his apparently only sympathizer. Not the least remarkable circumstance in his conversion, was the fact that the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the Holy Sacrament was no obstacle to him. There were great obstacles to his reception of Catholic truth, even in the modified and diluted form presented by the clergy of St. Matthew's, the greatest was the doctrine of baptismal regeneration; this was naturally from his Anabaptist training, a rock of offence to him, for a long time insurmountable; but the Eucharistic presence was no sooner fairly presented to him, than he

accepted it. So long had sophistry and vain disputation wearied and racked his mind, that when once he was convinced from Holy Scripture and Ecclesiastical History that the words, "*This is My body, this is My blood,*" were literally to be understood, than with humility he gave in his adhesion to the principle they taught, and submitted himself heart and soul to this wonderful, perpetual miracle in all its bearings. So the service of Holy Communion became to him heaven upon earth, there he took all his anxieties, there he poured out his soul before God, from thence he came never empty away. There he renewed his strength, there he found his surest consolation; before the table of the Lord he poured forth his confession of sin, till at last the sight of the altar was all that was needed to kindle the fire of his devotion. Nothing so strongly operated on his mind to receive this grand doctrine of Christianity as the study, the careful, deep, earnest study of the wonderful sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. John. Father Layton bade him read over and over again this portion of God's word, and then gave him the following key-notes to the whole.

"Note first, that Our Lord feeds five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes. Here out of an extremely small quantity of food, He feeds, by miraculously multiplying it, an immense number of persons. Note secondly, that He declares there is a heavenly and spiritual food, a bread of heaven, and that He himself is that *heavenly manna*, 'I am the bread of life.' Note thirdly, He declares that the bread He will give them is His flesh, which He will give for the life of the world, verse 51. That this cannot be meant in the mere spiritual and figurative sense, is evident to any unprejudiced mind from the following considerations. The Jews, we are told,

strove among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us His flesh to eat?'

"It is clear, therefore, they understood the words in their literal sense. If they were wrong in doing so, surely Our Lord would have explained His words more clearly; but in proof they were not wrong in their interpretation, He in the following six verses as many times reiterates in various phraseology, that His flesh is meat and must be eaten by the seeker after eternal life. But this is not all; in verse 60, we are told that many of His disciples hearing this, declared, 'It is an hard saying; who can hear it?'

"Surely, if it could have been explained away so easily, as the upholders of the Protestant figurative theory assert, this was the time for Our Lord to do it. Yet we are told that Christ not only hearing their murmurs, but knowing in Himself by His divine omniscience, that they found the teaching too hard for them, still vouchsafes no word of explanation, but lets them, many of them too, turn their backs on Him, and they walk no more with Him, verse 66; letting them therefore perish, as all must who turn their backs wilfully on the teaching of Christ, when, with a word, He could have solved their doubts; the man who rejects teaching so plain as this, must be beyond conviction. But that the teaching may be complete, we find Our Blessed Lord, in the night of His betrayal, giving bread and wine to His disciples, saying, 'This is My Body,—this is My Blood,—which *is* shed for many for the remission of sins,' Matt. xxvi. 26—29. Plainly instituting *then* the great Feast of which He had been speaking, after the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. But that the chain may lack no link, we find the teaching and practice of the Apostles set forth by St. Paul himself, in 1 Cor. xi.

23—29, in terms no less precise and conclusive than those of Our Blessed Lord, whose instructions he declares he has 'received' direct: he repeats the words of institution as Jesus uttered them, adding these awful ones of his own, 'Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord;—he eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body.' (How could he be punished for not discerning IT if IT were not there?) When we add to this that the whole consensus of the early Christian writers, and the witness of the monuments remaining from those times in the catacombs, are all susceptible of no other interpretation than the literal one, we have nothing left us as honest straightforward Christian men, but to yield our adhesion to the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar."

It is not argument, however learned, that converts people to the truth, it is the action of the Holy Spirit on a candid, honest, humble mind. Pride is, and ever was, at the bottom of all the heresies. The subject of our history was nothing if not candid and unprejudiced, and the truth of God took root in such congenial soil. The true doctrine of the Holy Eucharist was one of the first truths he learned from Father Layton.

Many other true and beautiful lessons he learned from his earnest, devoted teacher. A store-house of reading was opened to him, wherein he revelled in Church doctrine gladly, joyfully; for he felt the alphabet of Christianity had to be mastered, and his heresies unlearned one by one.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT."

SOME six weeks passed in this happy intercourse, prayer and Anglo-Catholic teaching were bringing Henry, by a way that he knew not, to the great rock of truth, where he should soon stand unshaken and secure.

It happened about this time that a remarkable work appeared by one of England's brightest divines, a scholar and a theologian whom all reverenced and were proud of. (Dr. Newman's "Apologia pro Vita sua.") Such a book was sure to be read by everybody, fortunately it was read by Pattison. The charm of the work was such that once commenced he could not close it till he had read and re-read it.

It was so remarkable to him as being written by a priest of the Church of Rome, he had always avoided their works because he imagined they must be arrogant, severe, and unloving, and lo! here was the tenderest, most sympathetic, simple, eloquent, and touching piece of autobiography he had ever read. He loved the man who had penned such ideas, in such charming style too. A host of prejudices against the Church of which he was so distinguished a member, were dispelled by their perusal, and his heart went warmly out towards their author.

He was delighted to find Dr. Newman declaring his love for the Bible: like most Protestants he thought Romanists hated and feared the Holy Scriptures; he saw too how no creature intervened between the author's soul and God, and that therefore it must be false that Catholics could only approach Our Lord through the Saints, it was evident that nothing but deep, earnest invocation of the Holy Spirit had

guided him to the Church of Rome, and therefore it was impossible to look upon that Church as the "Babylon," he had been taught to consider it. It seemed quite certain that God would be with one who had acted as Dr. Newman had, and if the beautiful prayer expressed in the following lines of that noble-minded man had not been answered by leading him right, it would seem useless to pray at all :—

"Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

"I was not ever thus, nor pray'd that Thou
Shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my path; but now
Lead Thou me on.
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

"So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."

A hundred times the truth-seeker made of these lines a prayer. Surely nothing could so well express his wants just then. But many other things were moulding and forming his mind besides those we have recorded.

Insensibly there had come to him an intense love to the person of the Virgin Mother of Christ; curiously this was first engendered by a passage in the works of Lange on the Gospels, when at Bunyan College, where he was [illegible]ribing "Christ as the highest type of

man," adds that in the same manner "Mary is the highest type of woman," and that the latter is necessary to the perfection of the former; as Christ is the New Adam, so Mary is the New Eve. This was the seed from which gradually arose a tree under whose shelter he should hereafter sit. The mere contemplation and study of the character of Mary in the Gospels would make any unprejudiced Christian love and reverence her, but strangely enough, Mary, the mother of the Lord who died for us, Mary who nursed at her virginal breasts, who tended, who carried, who worked for, who was the constant companion, who stood at the foot of the Cross of that Saviour of the world whom Protestants, Dissenters, Baptists especially, claim so ardently to love; whose sacred name is ever on their lips, if not in their hearts (and it is there *frequently*, *very frequently* we know),—strange, we say, that this Blessed Maid is the mark for all the insulting reproaches and slanderous libels these very persons bring against the Catholic religion. They think they do Jesus service by slandering His sweet Mother, and pay Him honour by defaming her whom He honoured more than all the angels in heaven and saints on earth. It is the perfection of Satan's work that the Reformers left us *motherless.*

Now Henry found his love for *Mary* growing daily, for she seemed to help his search for the will of God; it happened that one Sunday morning they sang at St. Matthew's some charming lines of Keble's:—

"Ave Maria! blessed Maid!
Lily of Eden's fragrant shade,
Who can express the love
That nurtured thee so pure and sweet,
Making thy heart a shelter meet
For Jesus' holy Dove?

"Ave Maria! Mother blest,
To whom, caressing and caress'd,
Clings the Eternal child;
Favour'd beyond Archangel's dream,
When first on thee with tenderest gleam
Thy new-born Saviour smiled.

"Ave Maria! thou whose name
All but adoring love may claim
Yet may we reach thy shrine;
For He, thy Son and Saviour, vows
To crown all lowly lofty brows,
With love and joy like thine."

And thus it was his first aspiration and invocation went up to Mary whom he felt was his mother, and to whom henceforth he vowed himself a faithful son. To love her needed no arguments, to be her humble champion no instruction or command; it was as natural as the love for an earthly parent. But there was a difficulty; he knew some went beyond this and addressed formal petitions to her, and expected gifts from her intercession; he could not go to this extent. He knew Dr. Newman had found an obstacle here; he remembered where he said, "Such devotional manifestations in honour of Our Lady had been my great *crux* as regards Catholicism;" yet as he did not go on to describe how he overcame the difficulty, he thought he would like very much to ask the Doctor how it came to pass that in a few pages after these words he finds that he has joined the Catholic Church. Moved by a similar passage in a recent work of another eminent Catholic, a clerical convert, he made bold to write to him to seek his advice in his present difficulties. This was readily and most sympathizingly given, his correspondent also forwarded a copy of Dr. Newman's Letter to Dr. Pusey, on his "Eirenicon," and strongly recommended him to visit a learned

priest, to whom he gave him a letter of introduction—Canon Elmsley, of London. Anything emanating from Dr. Newman had of course a special interest for Henry now. He read the remarkable pamphlet with great delight. As he perused it, he was forcibly struck by the fact that Catholics appeared in a very real manner to hold the doctrine of the Communion of Saints in its literal sense. He could see that it was no vague expression with them, as it certainly was with the Protestant Churchmen, who Sunday after Sunday repeated the words, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints"—the first of these articles they never could explain to the satisfaction of themselves or any one else; the second, they seemed never to pay the slightest attention to. But Catholics certainly had, to say the least, *intelligible* ideas on this as on every other part of their creed. There was no mistaking what they meant. Now *Communion* in the dictionaries is defined as *intercourse, fellowship*, "The Communion of Saints" must therefore mean intercourse and fellowship with them. Now who but Catholics hold this? How can Protestants, who call honours paid to Saints idolatrous, honestly say they believe in this article of their creed? On the other hand, the Catholics seemed to Henry to believe "in one family of God of which the Saints are the heavenly members and we the earthly, yet one family embracing earth and heaven;" that it was possible "to have access to them," and that "we have liberty to commune with them, that we can ask them for benefits, and they can gain them for us."

Dr. Newman remarked, p. 75 of his Letter, that in the Apocalypse, at least, "Angels are introduced both sending us their blessing and presenting our prayers before the Divine presence. We read there of an

Angel who 'came and stood before the altar having a golden censer;' and 'there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all Saints upon the golden altar which is before the Throne of God.' On this occasion, surely the Angel, Michael, as the prayer in the Mass considers him, performed the part of a great Intercessor or Mediator above, for the children of the Church Militant here below. Again, in the beginning of the same book the sacred writer goes so far as to speak of 'grace and peace' being sent us, not only from the Almighty, but 'from the seven spirits that are before His throne, thus associating the Eternal with the ministers of His mercies.'" The Doctor proceeds to show how St. Paul introduces not only Angels but the "spirits of the just" into the sacred Communion, and after pointing out that "intercession is the first principle of the Church's life," says, "we read of Jeremias, Moses, Samuel, Noe, Daniel, and Job, as being great mediators between God and His people. One instance is given us which testifies the continuance of so high an office beyond this life. Lazarus, in the parable, is seen in Abraham's bosom. What do we teach about the Blessed Virgin more wonderful than this? Let us suppose that, at the hour of death, the faithful are committed to her arms; but if Abraham, 'not yet ascended on high,' had charge of Lazarus, what offence is it to affirm the like of her, who was not merely the friend but the very Mother of God?" Holding then this beautiful doctrine, "that the Saints are present with us as truly as our fellow-men are present," it would be surprising indeed, Henry thought, if Catholics did not pay them great and adequate homage. Considering the honours paid to monarchs, how men kneel to them, bow to their empty throne,

use almost the language of slaves in addressing them, and dare not approach them without a ceremonial, surely it is only fitting and reverent that the saints should be more highly honoured in proportion as heaven is higher than earth. Yet, candidly, he could not say that Catholics did observe that proportion. After all, on careful investigation and calm reflection, he could not see that their language towards the Blessed Virgin and the Saints was so much above that which is used to great personages on earth, as immortal blessedness is above temporal power. Then again, he saw that Catholics very really loved the Saints of God; and, as Dr. Newman says, "I would not give much for that love which is never extravagant, which always observes the proprieties, and can move about in perfect good taste, under all emergencies." Certainly, the words used to express human love are sometimes almost idolatrous. Why are we so little jealous of human love, yet suddenly so shocked if we find Catholics transported by affection towards the Saints? Of course unconcerned persons readily make fun out of love-letters that turn up in courts of law. Protestants unconcerned, alas! about the Saints of God, deride the love of Catholics for them. Amongst the serious considerations gathered out of Dr. Newman's grand reply to Dr. Pusey, nothing more thoroughly arrested him than the parallel that great divine drew between Eve, and Mary the second Eve, "as Eve forfeited privileges by sin, so Mary earned privileges by the fruits of grace; as Eve was disobedient and unbelieving, so Mary was obedient and believing; as Eve was a cause of ruin to all, Mary was a cause of salvation to all; as Eve made room for Adam's fall, so Mary made room for Our Lord's reparation of it; Eve co-operated in effecting a great evil, Mary co-operated in effecting a

much greater good." In all these considerations there was abundant food for reflection, and yet he felt as far off certainty and rest as ever. A cloud appeared to have arisen and darkened the light that was shining on him. Once more his mind was racked with doubts about the very first principles he thought he had mastered. It seemed like filling a sieve with water; no sooner was fresh truth poured in than the other ran out, and his work must begin again. He tried to forsake his books for a time, and endeavoured to shake off in other pursuits his mental anxieties. He gave up the interviews with Father Layton, for he dreaded to pursue the course he was following—he felt it was leading him Romeward, and he dreaded *Rome.*

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE SHADOW OF THE CHURCH.

DAY by day the grand and awful figure of the Catholic Church, the one fold of the one Shepherd, rose more and more clearly from the gloom, revealing itself brighter and more distinctly to Henry's apprehension, till at last it seemed to beckon him, and say, "Follow me!" He dreaded to go forward—backward he could not go—he longed only to stand still. He put off the interview with the Canon mentioned by Dr. Newman, being determined not to be hurried in the direction he felt himself going; but to wait a while and think the matter out by himself.

He knew enough of Catholicism to see that it was a very different thing from the bugbear of his earlier life; that it had a great deal more to say for

itself that was reasonable and right than he had ever thought, that the origin of all the Protestant sects was in baseness and sin; and therefore they had nothing left but to slander the Parent Church they had forsaken, and to calumniate the doctrines that they found too hard to practise. It had come to this. The disentanglement of Catholic doctrine from the net of falsehood and perverse misrepresentation became the passion of his life, the devouring anxiety of his days, and the wakeful studies of his nights. He could scarcely eat or drink in his restless pursuit of the beautiful truths that one by one unfolded themselves to him; and if he slept, his mind was no less active than before, for he dreamed of what he had learned awake, and argued over again with imaginary opponents the questions he had studied ere he closed his eyes.

There was nothing now that he read that did not in one way or another assist him in his pursuits. By the new light he had acquired, the Holy Scriptures themselves should have made him a Catholic, for passages that he had thought dark and mysterious, and that had always been inexplicable to him as a Protestant, were now instinct with life and meaning, and at every turn the Bible bore witness to the doctrines that were claiming his adhesion.

The history of the early ages of the Christian faith proclaimed in unmistakable accents the antiquity of the Church's Creed, and the reasonableness and necessary existence of a teaching authority in the world forced itself upon him with an urgency it was as useless to resist as impious to reject.

Still the anxiety of his mind was getting terrible; the thought of Rome filled him with an indefinable dread, for the pictures burned into his mind by the

prejudices of his education had left a dislike to her and all her ways.

And yet he was so grateful to Almighty God for having given him *some* certainty in exchange for his miserable scepticism, *some* inner consolation and support in exchange for the vacuum the philosophers had left, that he dare not do otherwise than follow to the end the clue that lay before him.

Whither would it lead him? It was this that agitated him. Why not stay where he was?

Well, the Church of England is a sorry home for an ex-Dissenter; few, very few, ever leave the warmer atmosphere of Nonconformity for the chilling severity of the State Church. After all, it is so like the War Office or the Board of Trade that the "Department of the Civil Service commonly called the Established Church," is not a congenial home for a Dissenter.

Yet the High Church people, and especially the St. Matthewites, had done much to dispel the gloom, and make the services popular and attractive; still Henry could not but see it was after all only a "make believe," a playing at Popery—in a word a *sham*—because though it is very hard to define what the Church of England *is*, and what it *teaches* (if it teaches at all in any authoritative way), yet it was very clear to the honest, upright intelligence of young Pattison, that it certainly was not fairly represented by the doctrines and practices of St. Matthew's, however true and expedient they might be in themselves.

Very clearly, therefore, he saw that Puseyism would not be strong enough to retain him long, he saw it would be the stepping-stone to something else. He felt he could never have any enthusiasm for the Establishment, that it was a dead, cold thing gal-

vanized into a semblance of life by doctrines and practices borrowed from the Church of Rome. If these things were so good in the stream, what must they be at the fountain-head?

Torn by these conflicting thoughts two months had elapsed, when one day, chancing to be in Paternoster Row, he stopped before the window of a Catholic bookseller, the well-known firm of Boyles and Ryz; he went into the shop and asked for some manual explanatory of the Services and Ceremonial of the Catholic Church, and also for something calculated to assist an inquirer into her faith. He was politely handed "The Crown of Jesus," and "Milner's End of Religious Controversy," and was advised to study these carefully, and he would find all he wanted. But the shopman, seeing he had an inquirer before him, added, "If you have any difficulty to solve, why not see some intelligent priest?" This was just what our hero did not want, and he said so, explaining that he did not wish to be hurried. "Well, then," said the man, who was evidently intelligent and good-natured, "pardon me if I say that, if I can answer any question about our belief and practice, I am at your service whenever you like to call." Now this struck him as just what he wanted. There was no formal sitting at the feet of a fresh instructor; he could argue, dispute, or condemn freely here, while he would have been fettered and restricted at a more ceremonious interview. So he promised he would call when he had read the books he had just purchased, and went his way.

He found both works full of most interesting matter. He was astonished beyond measure to find that the morning and evening prayers he had been using while a disciple of Father Layton's, that the private devotions used at St. Matthew's during the Communion

Office, that many of the public prayers and hymns, and most of their special ceremonies, were just those in common use in the Church of Rome! True, some expressions were altered by the Anglicans, but the substance was the same.

Now he saw for certain that no Catholic was kept from direct intercourse with God in prayer. In a thousand beautiful devotions the soul of the creature was led into communion with the Creator. Above all, the most fervid, loving and hearty language that ever his Dissenting practice had taught him, was here used in a multitude of instances towards Our Blessed Lord, so that the grand charge, the chief slander against Catholics, that they were forbidden to approach their Heavenly Father *solus cum solo*, or "to go direct to Jesus," was here triumphantly answered, for in this book, the constant companion of English and Irish Catholics, over and over again were the daily devotions and hourly ejaculatory prayers shown to be addressed to God Himself, and our Saviour in person, without any Saint's or creature's intervention.

It was true that many prayers in the book were direct invocations to Blessed Mary and the Saints, but only for their assistance at the Throne of God. There was not one single aspiration even, to the Mother of Jesus as in any sense a Saviour, or able of her own power to deliver or help us; but simply as the Queen of Saints, the most exalted and highly honoured by Almighty God, as the purest of creatures, was she invocated to aid our prayers by adding her own. And the same with the other Saints and Angels to whom prayers were directed. The Catholic was taught to ask their help in a similar manner. Thus, gradually, the hideous fabrication of falsehood erected by ignorant, prejudiced, or malignant

persons against the Catholic and Roman Faith began to crumble away, and the puzzled inquirer was able to see the Truth unveiled before him. But it was a long and weary work. The mass of lies, and the *débris* of demolished slander took months to clear away, for it is easy to defame, but hard to re-establish the truth.

Then he read Milner's "End of Controversy," and weighed every argument, till he began to think so incontrovertible were they, that he could not hold out much longer—still the nameless fear held him back.

One day, he went to see his friend at the Booksellers', and finding him at leisure, entered into conversation with him.

Henry began,—"Why do you pray to Saints? how do you know they can hear you at all?"

Bookseller.—"Because being in a glorified and perfect state they know and see all things in God. We have instances in the Bible of this: for example, when the rich man in Hell spoke to Abraham in Heaven, did he not answer him, and in his answer manifest a knowledge of human affairs, and the dispositions of the relatives of the lost one, to whom he spoke? Then remember how we are told that the Angels rejoice in heaven over the repentant sinner on earth, how can they do this if they are ignorant what passes below?"

Henry.—"But is there not danger of the invocation of Saints leading to idolatry?"

Bookseller.—"Not at all; because the poorest and most illiterate Catholic you will find knows his religion too well ever to forget the immeasurable distance between a *creature*, however exalted, and the Divine Creator. You must be careful how you mis-

take his warmth of devotion to the friends of God for anything but relative honour."

Henry.—"Do you not make Our Lady a *mediator?*"

Bookseller.—"Certainly, and where is the harm? Christ is *the* Mediator. Is not the office of a *mediator* frequently undertaken even on earth? just as He is *The* Good Shepherd; are there not Good Pastors here below? He is *The* Good Physician; is it not lawful to call the medical man who cures you *a* good Physician?"

Henry.—"But why not go to the Fountain Head without assistance of any creature?"

Bookseller.—"Simply because it is unwise to reject so beautiful and efficacious a means of grace: "the Communion of Saints," when understood, is a great help to the Christian; but no one would for a moment prevent your going to the Fountain Head, as you say.

Henry.—"At times I am compelled to admit I think you honour St. Mary too much, and bring her too conspicuously forward in your services."

Bookseller.—"We can never honour her a thousandth part as much as God has honoured her—for she is the *Mother of God.*"

Henry.—"I object to that term Mother of God; she was the mother of the humanity of Christ; but the term Mother of God seems too strong."

Bookseller.—"Why? Do you, when speaking of your mother, explain that she was only the mother of your body, and not of your soul, which of course is infused from heaven? The mother is mother of the whole child, considered as a person, though strictly speaking she is only answerable for its flesh. You go out of your way to detract from the glory of Mary, if you

deny her the title given to her by the Council of Florence—of Mother of God.

Henry.—"I quite see that devotion to Our Lady is fraught with many advantages. Do you ever find it draws people away from Christ?"

Bookseller.—"On the contrary, it is just those who are most devout to Mary who are the most faithful followers of Christ Jesus, Mary always draws men to her Divine Son; and her most favourite image is that which represents her holding her Son for the adoration of the world."

Henry.—"Ah, that reminds me, I was going to say, I very much object to the worship of images. I fear you are guilty in that respect."

The Bookseller smiled and said, "If you had been born a Catholic, as soon as you were six or seven years of age, you would have learnt your Penny Catechism, for every Catholic child in the world has to be taught it ere he can approach the Sacraments; and in that Catechism you would have had the best answer to this remark of yours. I will point it out to you:—

"Q. Is it allowable to honour relics, crucifixes, and holy pictures?

A. Yes; with an inferior and relative honour, as they relate to Christ and His saints, and are memorials of them.

Q. May we pray to relics or images?

A. No, by no means; for they can neither see, nor hear, nor help us."

Henry.—"Then a sacred image or picture stands in the same relation to a devout Catholic that a portrait of a dear relation or friend would stand to one; you honour through it that which it represents."

Bookseller.—Exactly; you erect in the public way the statue of the man whom you wish to honour, and burn the hideous effigy of the person you would disgrace, thereby acknowledging in ordinary life what

you deny in religion, namely, that we can show respect to persons in their representations.

Henry.—"Still I should fear this clashed with the second commandment."

Bookseller.—"How absurd, when you know this was directed against the idolatries of the heathen, who made gods to adore. Did not God himself appear in the shape and the person of Christ to be adored? Did He not command images of angels to be placed in the Holy of Holies[1]? No one objects to a picture of Christ: if a picture, why not an embossed lithograph? if that, why not a bas-relief? if that, why not a statue? 'Tis absurd! It is the adoration of false gods that is forbidden, not the respect due to a representation. If it were otherwise, even a Protestant would commit idolatry every time he prayed; for the mind is so constituted that, to aid our mental efforts, we must have an intellectual creation in our mind of the person we pray to, or we cannot pray. I dare say when you repeat 'Our Father,' you make an image in your brain of the 'Eternal Ancient of Days,' and so does the best iconoclast amongst you. No! at least credit us when we protest against the charge of Paganism. But if you object to images, you never need pray before one, there is no command of the Church to do so."

Henry.—"I wish your services were not in Latin; it seems as though you wished to keep the people in the dark by using an unknown tongue."

Bookseller.—"Pardon me, Latin was formerly the best known language in the world; and as the Church is universal so must its language be, and Latin comes nearest to that. Do not all the physicians of Europe write their prescriptions in Latin? and the consequence

[1] See Exodus xxv. 18—22.

is they are understood everywhere by educated persons. In the same way a Catholic going to Mass in China or Brazil, in France or England, hears the familiar language of the Sacraments in which he was taught in infancy. Even our children and servants find no difficulty whatever in following the services, they so soon get familiar with the words. Besides, it is only the priest who uses the Latin text, the people all have the translation in the vernacular in their own prayer-books, and consequently know what passes as well as if said in their own tongue."

Henry.—"But why not have the services in the common language of the country?"

Bookseller.—"Partly for the reason I have given you, but chiefly because it is necessary for the Church desiring to be exact in her terminology, and avoid new interpretations, to use a dead and scientific language in her Offices in preference to a new and constantly changing tongue."

Henry.—"If I were sure that the poor and unlettered found no hindrance to their devotion by the use of the Latin tongue, I for my own part should be well pleased by its use."

Bookseller.—"Well, as in all countries, the poor flock to our churches in crowds, and you Protestants, Episcopalians and Dissenters alike, are for ever complaining that you cannot reach the masses, I think your scruples are answered."

Henry.—"I thank you for your attention to me and rest assured I shall trouble you frequently, if you are good enough to permit me. I will go and muse over what I have learnt to-day."

Bookseller.—"Good-bye; I hope you will soon be more settled in your mind, and I will do anything I can to aid you."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE VOICE OF AUTHORITY.

It seemed the better the answers to his difficulties, the farther he was off solving them. He went again and again to the good Bookseller, till at last he resolved to see the priest to whom his clerical correspondent had recommended him. He went accordingly, and was shown into an ordinary but plainly furnished parlour; here were no peculiarities like those in Father Layton's room at the Puseyite clergy-house; the latter was a museum of ecclesiastical fine arts, this was a common sitting-room, such as any ordinary mortal might use.

When the good Canon knew his errand, and who had sent him, he was very kind and courteous; though he lacked the suavity of the Anglican Priest, he was by no means so ascetic and unsympathetic as the Roman Priest of his imagination. Henry laid before him exactly the state of his mind, and told him how as fast as one difficulty was answered another rose up; like the turning of an endless chain, the old ones kept coming forward for re-solution.

"Exactly," says the Canon, "and if you proceed on the principles you have begun, you will never be any nearer the end than you are now. The devil will take care that you shall never be without a difficulty, be it a great or a paltry one, to keep you out of the true Church. If you wait till all your scruples are satisfied you will die an alien to the faith, take my word for it."

"What am I to do then?" said the astonished inquirer, surprised beyond measure that the Canon

did not propose some method of settling his difficulties *seriatim.*

"I will tell you in a few words," said the Canon. "Either God has founded one true and infallible Church who has authority over you, and who claims your unquestioning obedience, or He *has not.* If He has, and you know where to find it, is it not your bounden duty to submit to it, and leave the objections you feel to some minor points in its teaching till God shall give you grace to understand it more fully? If He has not, and you are convinced that our Saviour left His beautiful teaching to be scrambled for, fought about and wrangled over, none of the sects being altogether right and none altogether wrong, then you may just as well go away and found a new religion for yourself, taking what you please, and rejecting what does not suit you, as not. In that case, as there is no truth at all, but only confusion and a Babel of teachers, I should not bother myself about it at all. But as you know this is the *reductio ad absurdum,* I leave you to settle the other side of the question, the *Church's authority* over you."

This was entirely a new view of the whole question. Henry's mind was too logical not to see at once the immense force of this way of stating the case, but as it needed a great deal of thinking over, he soon closed the interview, promising to call again before long. And the more he thought of the subject the more he found that all the rest of the difficulty was as nothing to this. Here was the great question to settle. Was there an infallible teaching Church? this was the thing to examine. Now he felt all the other points he had been worrying himself about, were childish and insignificant to this. If God had left one Authority in matters of faith, whose decision was

final, who was preserved from falling into error, who was always the same living, accessible, active Court of appeal, how ridiculous it was to trouble oneself about the use of one language in preference to another, or the Baptism of infants in preference to leaving it to riper years, or the Canon of Scripture, or any other points that must necessarily be insignificant when compared to this great question.

And did it not seem wonderfully reasonable that there should be a teaching authority? The Jewish Church had authority over the Old Testament believers. Would it be reasonable to suppose Christ had dissolved the old and left no successor in its place? That the endless divisions and logomachies of the present day, for instance, were actually foreseen and intended, as a Dissenting Divine once said, that they might be as the multitudinous roots of the Banyan-tree, although widely separate, making by a slender bond of union one great tree.

So the more he pondered over the matter, the more clearly shone out the legend over the gates of Rome, "One fold of the One Shepherd."

He soon found himself once more in consultation with the Canon, who demanded to know if he had been thinking over the question of the Church's authority which he had propounded to him at the last interview.

Henry.—"The theory is magnificent in the extreme; my difficulty is, can it be proved to be the fact?"

The Canon.—"Do you think it would have been the wisest and best thing for us if Our Lord *had* left this teaching authority of which I spoke? Would it have been better for us, I mean, than the uncertainty in matters of faith that exists among strangers to the Catholic faith?"

Henry.—"Most assuredly; I can conceive nothing so admirable."

The Canon.—"Then do you think it reasonable that Our Lord would have omitted to establish this authority before He left the world, when it was so desirable to have done so?"

Henry.—"It would seem not, unless He desired to stimulate inquiry."

The Canon.—"But for men never to know when they were right! What chaos! How unlike the Natural order!"

Henry.—"But they have the Bible."

The Canon.—"No, not even that apart from the Church! Not even your boasted Scriptures! For you need not to be told that your Bible is not handed down from heaven to you exactly in the condition you obtain it from the Bible Society. The collation, the translation, the settlement of the Canon of Scripture, the separation of the Apocryphal and false Books that so long were mixed up with the written Word of God; all these things were the work of *men* who lived, as you know, long after the apostolic age, and if their work was given to the world as the work of fallible men, what becomes of your pet theory—The Bible, and the Bible only, the religion of Protestants? But if, as is the fact, all this was done at the instance of the Catholic Church, who was guided by the Holy Spirit, and preserved from all possibility of error, then you are on the other horn of the dilemma, for you accept the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church and Council, which settled what *was* and what was *not* to be considered the Inspired Word of God."

Henry.—"I must admit that it is a most forcible argument; I cannot answer you."

The Canon.—"Then consider that the early Chris-

tians could only have had the Scriptures in a fragmentary condition, probably for a long time only the letters written by the Apostles to the particular Churches to which they were sent. You know it was the close of the first century before St. John's Apocalypse was even written. How many generations of early Christians do you think had passed away before the Bible was completed and settled in the form we have it in now? The world was evangelized before the Church itself had the complete and unadulterated Bible in its possession. Then consider that it was impossible before the discovery of printing, and the general spread of education consequent upon it, that any but a very few could have possessed the Holy Book. So that Christ could never have intended that the Bible was to be the only authority in matters of faith. Then reflect how men 'wrest' as the Apostle says, 'the Scriptures to their own destruction.' There is not a sect with the most ridiculous caricature of a religion that does not profess to found its doctrines on the Bible! Look at the Mormonites, with their polygamy taken from the Old Testament; the Peculiar People, who will die rather than have a doctor or take medicine, because St. James recommends holy unction for the sick; and Father Ignatius Spencer relates in his travels, that he once saw in a bookseller's shop an account of a new sect called the Ward's men, and making inquiry he learnt that it had its rise thus: a preacher named Ward conceived himself to be especially sent from God to proclaim a new religion, and he claimed as his authority to teach his brethren the text, 'Peace on earth, good will to Ward's men,' so armed with these credentials he preached his new gospel. No book, I need not tell you, as a student of Divinity, has been so ill-used as the Bible. Then let

me ask you what is the Bible? . What do you mean by it? Take Dean Alford's Greek Testament, and note the various readings of the different manuscripts, from which the Protestant received text is compiled; one of these readings, for aught you know, may be as correct as the other. How can you tell which is the Inspired Word, and which is not? Surely the imprimatur of King James is not sufficient for you!"

Henry.—"I have no reply. Your arguments, against my will, convince me you are right; but may I ask you how does the Catholic Church know that *she* herself has the true Scriptures?"

The Canon.—"Because the Church, being anterior to the Scriptures, has produced them by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and knowing her own work, has conserved them and handed them down intact to the present day; for you must know that the Catholic Church did not arise out of the New Testament, but the New Testament from IT. St. Augustine once declared he would not accept the Holy Gospels themselves unless the Church had commanded him."

Henry.—"I have no doubt that my inquiries must ultimately make me a Catholic; but I have so many difficulties, there are so many things to which I cannot conscientiously give my obedience; I should be glad, therefore, if I could lay them one by one before you, and if you can satisfy me respecting them, it will clear the way for my embracing the teaching of the Church."

The Canon.—"I can do nothing of the kind; it would be labour lost. It is not for you to sit in judgment on Christ's Church; she claims your obedience, as I have told you, because she is the voice of Christ in the world; and if you came to her merely because you liked this doctrine and that practice, you would

come in a wrong spirit, and though externally a Catholic, you would be so only in name, for at heart you would be Protestant still, because it would be your *opinion* and your *private judgment* that had led you to her and not your *faith*. She claims your *unquestioning* obedience for what she *is*, and until you can yield it for that reason, a Catholic you cannot be."

The Canon rose as he said these words, and Henry, thanking him for the attention he had given him, but seemingly little if at all nearer the truth than he was weeks ago, took his leave.

"Stay, my friend," said the clergyman, "take with you this little prayer. Prayer alone can help you now, reading will only hinder your conversion; it was composed by a Protestant, a Mr. Mayer, when in anxiety and uncertainty as to the true faith. Repeat it daily on your knees, and God will help you sooner or later. See, the words are just suited to your present condition :—

'PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE INTO TRUTH.

'GOD of all goodness, Almighty and eternal, Father of mercies, and Saviour of mankind; I implore Thee, by Thy sovereign goodness, to enlighten my mind and to touch my heart, that by means of true faith, hope, and charity, I may live and die in the true religion of Jesus Christ. I confidently believe that, as there is but one God, there can be but one faith, one religion, one only path to salvation, and that every other path opposed thereto can lead but to perdition. This path, O my God, I anxiously seek after, that I may follow it, and be saved. Therefore, I protest before Thy Divine Majesty, and I swear by all Thy Divine attributes, that I will follow the religion which Thou shalt reveal to me as the true one, and will abandon, at whatever cost, that wherein I shall have discovered errors and falsehood. I confess that I do not deserve this favour for the greatness of my sins, for which I am truly penitent, seeing they offend a God, who is so good, so holy, and so worthy of

love! but what I deserve not, I hope to obtain from Thine infinite mercy; and I beseech Thee to grant it unto me through the merits of that precious blood which was shed for us sinners by Thine only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth, God, world without end. Amen.'"

CHAPTER XXIX.

"A LION IN THE WAY."

AMONGST the friends with whom Henry still associated were a Mr. and Mrs. Rivers. As they had known his mother and sister for many years they were privileged to treat him almost as a son; they knew all his affairs, and were deeply interested in his mental anxieties. Though pious and earnest Christians, they were both entirely without any settled religious convictions; nominally Episcopalians of the Evangelical School, they were equally satisfied with the ministrations of Boanerges, the pastor of Salem Chapel or the Little Bethel round the corner. They belonged to that peculiar class of people, so frequently met with in London and other large cities of England, that we must call "religious flirts." They coquetted now with the Wesleyans, now with the Baptists; sometimes they "sat under" an Islington Evangelical, and then would forsake him for the highly ritualistic services of St. Matthew's. Like bees, they flitted from flower to flower, and professed themselves equally able to extract honey from the gorgeous Puseyite sunflower or the modest Little Bethel violet. So they wondered immensely at Henry's agitation at not being able to find out the truth when they could see it everywhere. They assured him that for some months past they

had taken the Lord's Supper at the hyper-Calvinist Chapel near their suburban home, but that they intended to communicate at St. Matthew's at the grand Christmas Festivals, when the services would be so ornate and æsthetic; and when Henry jokingly asked them how they could possibly enjoy the barn-like "Zoar" after beautiful St. Matthew's, and how they could bear to hear "faith only" preached after the works that were also insisted on at the latter church, they declared that they were too cosmopolitan to notice such minor differences, and protested that there was no flag to fight under like religious eclecticism.

They amused poor Henry immensely. He used to tell them they would never have to suffer as martyrs to conviction, that was one comfort; and would often rally Mr. Rivers, telling him what a capital "Vicar of Bray" he would have made.

At times they would accompany him to the Catholic chapel, where he used to go to study the services, but especially would they do this if he were going to any grand function on a feast day, and could promise them a treat in the way of music. They would profess themselves lifted to the seventh heaven of devotion by the strains of Mozart and Haydn in the morning, and would complacently sit under "Stiggins" or "Chadband" in the evening, when they fulminated against Popery in the white-washed barn where they held forth.

But there was a limit to all this. *Coquette* with Rome they would willingly, and so might their friend; but no sooner did they detect his tendency, and feel sure that he would before long actually unite himself to her, than the latent hatred to the Church of our Fathers, that no one could have imagined existed in their liberal hearts, flared up in alarm.

Now they were earnest indeed. Henry might have become a Quaker, and they would have conducted him to meeting and congratulated him on his conversion. He might have joined the Unitarians, and they would only have said, "Well, if your convictions lead you that way, you are bound to follow them;" and they would have read *Unitarian* books, and sometimes gone to chapel with him. He might have turned Swedenborgian, and they would have been enchanted to learn all about the visions; or an Irvingite, and they would have been delighted to hear him jabber in the Unknown tongue; *Shaker*, and they would only have laughed at him; Primitive Methodist, and they would have chorussed his prayers with Amens and *Hallelujahs*, and found it "good to be *there*." Anything but a *Papist*—Fire-worshipper! Mohammedan! Buddhist! if he would—and they would only have shaken their heads, and said they could scarcely be expected to go thus far with him. But Popery, oh horrible! could nothing be done to stop him?

They would try. They knew a clergyman at Islington, a fierce anti-Popery lecturer, and they borrowed of him the cleverest controversial books they could and lent them to Henry; at first he refused to look at them, but at last he yielded in despair, just to satisfy them. And so he had a host of knotty questions in Church history to grapple with, in addition to his other obstacles.

At last the controversialist himself came to see him; and, to his credit it must be said, that when he heard Henry declare that to him there was no stand-point or resting-place for his feet between the Rationalism from which he had escaped and the Catholic Church to which he was tending, he abandoned the idea of stopping his progress, lest he should convert him back

to what was almost as objectionable to him. But he left, like Satan, the smell of brimstone behind him, for he gave Henry a book so artfully planned to arrest the steps of those whose feet were set Romeward, that for a time he abandoned his course thitherward, and in despair let theology and controversy alone. And so it came to pass that one day he met Father Layton, who inquired how he was getting on with his religious inquiries.

"I have made up my mind," said Henry, "not to join Rome; I shall try to be a faithful son of the Church of England; it is the only course open to me, and I must get rest at any cost; this anxiety is wearing me out."

And then the Anglican, delighted to find that he was likely to be a safe convert to receive, and that he would be able to rest satisfied in the bosom of the "English Branch" of the Church, named a day for his reception, and volunteered to assist him in the general confession of the sins of his life, which he must write out *in extenso*, and read to him in the confessional at the church.

And so the poor young man, only too glad to pour out the tale of his sins to him whom he thought the Priest of God, and the sympathizing minister whose advice would be so acceptable, prepared a minute catalogue of all the faults, venial and mortal, that he could remember, as though it were the judgment-seat of Christ he was before, instead of a minister of the Church of England.

Kneeling at his side, he read the history of the sins of his life; and if ever penitent felt contrition of heart, it was felt by our hero that day. He rose feeling that he had done right, for the anxious mind was relieved and the troubled soul was comforted by

the assurance that the confession made to Christ through His minister, received His absolution through the same channel.

The admirable instructions he received were thankfully listened to and obeyed.

He was directed to forward apologies to those whom he had scandalized—as far as was practicable—and to atone as far as possible for all the sins he had confessed, and making acts of contrition, promise by God's grace never to offend in the like again.

Then he was baptized according to the rites of the Established Church, and admitted thereupon to communion with her.

For some months he followed in comparative peace the way of an English Churchman. The practice of frequent confession and communion seemed to strengthen and support him. The devotions he followed certainly made him a better man; only at times the still small voice would come to him, "This is not your mother, this State Establishment is a hireling nurse at best; there is one, on whom you have turned your back, who alone can lead you to the green pastures and the company of the Saints of God."

Then he fell to reading to convince himself he was in the right; and all along he kept feeling how weak were the arguments against Rome, and how he never had answered, and felt he never could answer, the powerful words of the Canon on *Authority*.

He bought so many books that at last he sought a Catholic lending library, where he might borrow the works he needed. He was directed by his friend the Bookseller to the Catholic Library, North Street, Grandover Square—there he found everything he wanted—kept by two elderly ladies, highly intellectual and

devout Roman Catholics, who most kindly gave him all the information and assistance he required. And so, going often for the books he needed, they became friends together; they would talk to him by the hour about his scruples, and gave him such admirable answers to his questions, that he became a constant and ever-welcome visitor. But all this mental anxiety was undermining his health; he grew thin and pale, careworn and nervous; so that some of his friends thought if he did not soon get rest he would find it in the churchyard.

CHAPTER XXX.

GEOGRAPHICAL CHRISTIANITY.

It was the eve of Ascension Day, 18—, and Pattison had made up his mind he would see Father Layton, and tell him how forcibly he felt drawn towards Rome. He met him on the pavement that ran round the church, and they walked together.

"I often go to the Roman Catholic churches," said Henry, "and I feel there as I never feel elsewhere, that I am in the immediate ante-chamber of heaven; that there is a presence, an awful solemnity in the place, that tells me Christ is more really there than in our own church; and when the Sacred Host is taken from the tabernacle, at benediction, I feel that the angels surround it, and I am filled with awe and love; that, in fact, this is *reality*, while that we have is at best but *doubtful*."

Father Layton.—"You do wrong to attend Roman services; you have your own Church and that should

suffice you. You will commit the sin of schism if you join the Church of Rome, and you are dallying with it to your danger."

Henry.—"But if, as you say, Rome is our sister, why may we not associate?"

Father Layton.—"Because Rome has no right or *locus standi* here in England, just as we have no right in France or Italy. When I go to either of those countries I never dream of attending any other churches than those of Rome, lest I be in danger of schism; and so here no Anglo-Catholic has a right to attend the services of that Church because the English branch alone has jurisdiction in these realms."

Henry.—"Oh then, in France, for instance, the Roman Church is right? And if I lived there I should do right to go to their places of worship?"

Father Layton.—"Certainly!"

Henry.—"Then, as I do not believe in geographical Christianity, I fear I cannot obey you when you ask me not to do in England what I may conscientiously do in France. I cannot believe that religion can be injured by so short a sea voyage as crossing the Channel, and decline to assent to your *dictum* that what is good for my soul in France is bad for it here. Besides, I must plainly but respectfully say, that I cannot agree with you that the Church of England has any other jurisdiction than is granted to it by the State; and as Henry VIII. invented that Church after Rome had had 1500 years start of it, and had converted all Europe—England with it—to her faith, I shall, when it comes to jurisdiction, rather be inclined to yield to her claims than to England's."

Father Layton was annoyed, especially when Henry told him that a branch, however really it might have once belonged to the parent tree, if cut off, would

perish, and that he feared the Church of England was a dead branch. They parted—they never met again. The rest Henry had sighed for so long was drawing near. The haven of calm and holy peace and confidence in the truth would soon receive the weather-beaten wanderer. Leaving the church, he proceeded to the library, and found the ladies at their work. He told them of the interview with the clergyman; the elder lady, a good motherly creature, said, "My poor friend, you will be tossed about, the sport of every wave of doubt and wind of doctrine, till you enter Peter's ship—there Our Lord was often to be found on earth; none but Peter's boat He ever entered; there in Peter's bark He is found now; there alone is safety; He is there to still the waves. Peter guides the ship, and Jesus teaches from it as He did on the shores of Gennaseret—enter this ark of safety or the waters will swallow you up."

The anxious man caught at the beautiful figure, and he talked to them long on the matter so near his soul.

"Will you promise," said the lady who had spoken of Peter and his ship, "one thing to me?"

"I will," said Henry.

"You know the hymn in the Ordination Service of the Church of England, 'Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire?"

"I do," said he.

"Promise me," she said, "that morning and night you will say this hymn, kneeling, till *Whitsunday* next. It wants now but a short time to that day; yet I feel safe in promising that God will manifest His will to you by that time, even if He work a miracle to do it. You are too earnest and anxious for God to forget you. He is only trying you now. He has work for you to do, and this is your probation. I wish we could pre

vail on you to see a Priest who lives near here, he would be the man for you! He is a warm-hearted, learned Irishman. You would love him as soon as you saw him."

Henry declared he would rather not, he would wait and see what God would do for him.

So he went home and had not been there long ere a letter was handed to him from the good woman who was so interested in him; she implored him therein not to tempt God more, but to do at once what he knew he was bound to do, yield himself to the Catholic Church, his Mother who had called to him so long. She said she would speak about him to the Priest she had mentioned, and hoped she would soon be allowed to introduce him to Father Bilway.

And still he felt a nervous dread, for he felt his opposition to the Church ebbing out hour by hour, he knew it could not be long ere he was a Catholic, but yet could not bring his mind to contemplate with pleasure his union with the Faith of Rome. Yet he loved her saints; the stories of their glorious lives, amazing and superhuman charity, and self-annihilation, filled him with desire to be of their family—no longer a stranger and an alien to the Household of faith, but able to call these friends of God his brethren and sisters.

About this time he read "Fabiola," by Cardinal Wiseman, and "Callista," by Dr. Newman. These exquisite works, founded on the historical events of the Early Church, the Church of the Martyrs and the Catacombs, so clearly and powerfully united in his mind the Roman Catholic religion of the present day with the religion of the ages described therein, that he knew they must be the same. No longer able to resist the truth, he prayed that sweet St. Agnes, St.

Polycarp, and the other martyred Saints, would help him to find his way to them, and then the lovely prayer that occurs in the Mass, lit up by the strong sunlight of these exquisite tales, gave him the very words he wanted, and he asked God to hear the prayers he knew they would offer for him, in the Church's own words :—

"Also to us sinners, Thy servants, confiding in the multitude of Thy mercies, vouchsafe to grant some part and fellowship with Thy holy apostles and martyrs, with John, Stephen, Barnabas, Ignatius, Alexander, Marcelline, Matthias, Peter, Felicitas, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cecily, Anastatia, and with all Thy saints ; into whose company we beseech Thee to admit us, not in consideration of our merit, but of Thy own gratuitous pardon : through Christ, our Lord. "

Ending where the list of the blessed ones does in that prayer, it proved to him it was composed soon after their time; it was contemporaneous with the early and suffering Church, and used daily in the Masses he heard here in London in the nineteenth century, it showed him plainly who were the actual descendants of those who knew the way of Christ so well.

Unspeakably dear to him were "Fabiola" and "Callista." "Convince me," he cried, "that the Church I am drawn to is the Church of the Coliseum—the bloody arena of the gladiators, where ten thousand heavenly martyrs gave up their noble lives for God, and I will be her *humblest slave.*" He wrote to the lady at North Street, telling her she might introduce him to Father Bilway when she would.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PETER'S BARK.

FATHER BILWAY, knowing something of Henry's story, received him with the greatest sympathy and affection. He spoke with just enough Irish accent to give all he said a charming richness, and was so witty and withal so earnest and homely, yet evidently with a rare store of knowledge in reserve, that our hero was at home and *en rapport* with him immediately.

"You shall come to see me every day if you like, only I am very much occupied, and you must be here by six in the morning. You won't mind that, will you? You shall tell me all your difficulties, and we will solve them one by one, I sha'n't hurry you; rake up all you have been told or have read against the Church! Pooh! The answer is so easy! God's Church, you know, can't be wrong. You may not know the answer to all the absurd and wicked libels the devil is always urging against the Spouse of Christ, but be sure there is a triumphant answer to every one of them. I promise you ere you have been a year in the Church you will lament the loss of every one of these days you have been outside her pale."

And so day after day they talked together, and still the doubtful and uncertain mind could not entirely yield, though his opposition waned and paled, and still the patient, humble Priest kept on with his weary and seemingly endless task.

Whitsunday morning had dawned, the festival when the Church commemorates the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, who was to guide the Church

into all truth, and be with her till the end of all things.

Henry had daily said the hymn, "Come, Holy Ghost," and he had expected before this, the last of the appointed days he had promised to say it, that God would have made his way clear to him. Half hoping, half doubting, he repeated it once more, and then started to attend High Mass at Moorfields. The Archbishop was to preach; when he arrived at the church it was almost crowded, room was only to be found for him close to the altar rails on a chair placed with others to economize space. The service had not commenced; he hoped much from the Archbishop's sermon, God might have a word for him in that. Soon the procession of acolytes announced the coming of His Grace of Westminster, who appeared in the beautiful vestments, with the mitre and the pastoral staff, that all are familiar with as the ecclesiastical dress of a Bishop of the Church of Rome. Majestically he proceeded, blessing the people with his uplifted hand, his noble and ascetic face reminding Henry of the pictures of St. Thomas of Canterbury—the Catholics knelt as he approached, but some young ladies and gentlemen, in the same row of seats as Henry, tittered at the procession and ceremonial they did not comprehend, and had too little breeding to treat respectfully. But Pattison knowing that the Archbishop was the representative of that Church, who demanded so powerfully and so sweetly his adhesion, reverently made his obeisance to the pastoral office and the man. The Archbishop noticed him, and giving him his blessing with his thin transparent hand, passed up the altar-steps.

Reader! Did you ever receive a letter that in two words lifted a heavy load from your heart that had pressed you down for many days and nights?

Did one ever run to you and tell your waiting, anxious, fearful mind some good news that took you straight out of the "winter of discontent" to the summer of joy and peace? If so, you know somewhat how Henry felt at this moment; for thus it was with the Bishop's blessing, God's good Spirit, the Counsellor and the Comforter, had come down this blessed Whitsunday, and scattered with its Omnipotent Breath the dark clouds of doubt and uncertainty that had so long hung over him. Moving over the face of his soul, IT separated the land of truth from the shifting seas of doubt and unrest, and what before was all chaos, was now a new-born world.

He had no more doubts; he left them, as Bunyan's Pilgrim left his load, at the foot of the Cross. He went home, and thanked God He had at last, after all these weary months, sent him the peace that comes with the Truth. That beautiful, happy, sunshiny summer evening he spent with Father Bilway. When he saw him, the good Father expected he had come to take up the thread of his instructions, and get a fresh batch of difficulties settled. "Where did we leave off?" said the Priest.

"Father," said the happy man, "my doubts have all vanished. I have come to submit myself to the Church, and will do as you wish me, be what it may!"

The astonished divine looked at the man in sheer amazement. "What no more difficulties; and we had only got as far as 'justification?' *Gloria tibi Domine!* But how has it all come about? To be sure we have all been praying for you, and God always hears prayer. But tell me, man; I am impatient!"

Then Henry told him all.

"I am not a bit surprised," said the Priest, "because it was your pride, your stubborn private judgment,

that kept you from submitting yourself to the Church; and no sooner had you made that act of submission, for I know you bowed your heart to the *Church* when you inclined your head before her *representative*, than God heard your prayer: He was watching for that submission, and with the Bishop's blessing removed your burden. Let us thank Him, and Mary, His blessed mother, whose prayers for you have prevailed with Him."

"Now I want to end it all, and enter the Church of God as soon as may be; still I know how much I lack. Shall I put myself under your instruction say for a year, and then if you think me fit to receive, unite me to your——"

"Follow me," said Father Bilway, and he took him to a little study, where next a table covered with books, and on which was a crucifix, stood an arm-chair. "Kneel down before the cross, place your soul in presence of Him who died thereon for you, and make a solemn and general confession of the sins of your whole life, from infancy to now, as well as you can remember them."

"Oh, Father, not now; why, when I made my first confession to Father Layton, it took me days to prepare, and when written out, three-quarters of an hour to read!"

The good Priest smiled, and said, "Do as I tell you. I will help you."

And he obeyed. Then the general confession of the sins of his past life over, the ambassador of Christ bidding him make a sincere act of contrition to Almighty God, pronounced over him the words of absolution, and directed him what prayers to use; and said, "Come to me to-morrow morning, and I shall receive you then."

"What, so soon?"

"To-morrow morning," said the other; "be prepared to pronounce your profession of faith at the altar-rails in the words I point out to you in your prayer-book."

Henry went home with a light and happy heart, but still a tremor ran through his heart as he thought how solemn was the act to which he had committed himself. Still so plainly was God's will manifested to him that he had faith all would be well.

At the appointed time he was at the church adjoining the house where the good Priest dwelt.

"Follow me to the altar," said the latter, "and kneel before it." The Father then entered within the sanctuary, and after some brief prayer to the Holy Ghost, repeated the psalm Miserere, commencing "Have mercy on me, O God."

Then the convert made his profession of faith[1] in the following terms, in a clear voice:—

"I, [. . . .], with a firm faith, believe and profess all and every one of those things which are contained in that Creed which the holy Roman Church maketh use of. To wit: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible: and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages; God of God; Light of light; true God of the true God; begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was Incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man. He was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, suffered, and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures: He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and lifegiver, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son: who, together with the Father and

[1] This is commonly called the Creed of Pope Pius IV

the Son, is adored and glorified; who spake by the Prophets. And in one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

"I most steadfastly admit and embrace the apostolical and ecclesiastical Traditions and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church.

"I also admit the holy Scriptures, according to that sense which our holy mother the Church hath held and doth hold, to whom it belongeth to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures: neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.

"I also profess that there are truly and properly Seven Sacraments of the new law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all for every one: to wit, Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony: and that they confer grace: and that of these, Baptism, Confirmation, and Order, cannot be repeated without sacrilege. I also receive and admit the received and approved ceremonies of the Catholic Church, used in the solemn administration of the aforesaid Sacraments.

"I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the holy Council of Trent concerning original sin and justification.

"I profess, likewise, that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. And that in the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially the Body and Blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body, and of the whole of the substance of the wine into the Blood; which conversion the Catholic Church calleth Transubstantiation. I also confess that under either kind alone Christ is received whole and entire, and a true Sacrament.

"I constantly hold that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.

"Likewise, that the Saints reigning together with Christ are to be honoured and invocated, and that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be had in veneration.

"I most firmly assert that the Images of Christ, of the Mother of God ever Virgin, and also of other Saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be given them.

"I also affirm that the power of Indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people.

"I acknowledge the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church for the mother and mistress of all Churches; and I promise true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, successor of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ.

"I likewise undoubtedly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred Canons and General Councils, and particularly by the holy Council of Trent. And I condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church hath condemned, rejected, and anathematized.

"I, [. . . .], do at this present freely profess and sincerely hold this true Catholic faith, out of which no one can be saved[2]:

[2] *Out of the Catholic Church none can be saved.* This proposition, which highly displeases all sectarians and infidels, is not only clearly established by the authority of Scripture, and by the perpetual and constant belief of the Catholic Church, but it is also evident from reason itself, so that one must needs be blind, who does not perceive its truth. This, however, applies only to those persons who culpably and wilfully adhere to heresy, or schism, or infidelity, but by no means to those who have been imbued with errors and prejudices from their earliest years, and to whom not even a doubt occurs that they are involved in heresy or schism, or who, if any doubt arises in their minds, earnestly and sincerely seek after the truth; such persons we leave to the judgment of God, to whom it belongs to penetrate and search the thoughts and dispositions of hearts. For it is incompatible with the divine goodness and clemency that any one should suffer eternal torments, who is not guilty of a wilful transgression. To assert the contrary, would be against the express doctrine of the Church.

"Let us hear St. Augustine: 'We must not,' says he, 'class among heretics those persons who, without wilful obstinacy, maintain a false and perverse doctrine, especially if it is not the offspring of their bold presumption, but a legacy from their deceived and mistaken parents, and who search after the truth with earnest care, being disposed to renounce their error as soon as they are apprised of it." *Epist.* 43, *Edit. Benedict. alias* 162. A long list of other Fathers might be cited, who are of the same opinion. It follows from what has been said, that every one is bound, to the best of his power, to consider the doubts

and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and inviolate, by God's assistance, to the end of my life."

After which the Priest gave the Absolution:—

"MAY our Lord Jesus Christ absolve thee and I, by His authority, absolve thee, from the chain of excommunication, which thou hast incurred for (such an action or cause), and restore thee to the communion and unity of the faithful, and to the holy Sacraments of the Church, in the name of the Father ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen;"

and concluded with some few prayers.

He was baptized by pouring water over his head three times, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, receiving in this Sacrament the name of "Ignatius" as his "Church name," being that of the patron Saint he had a great devotion to, Ignatius of Loyola, the illustrious founder of the Order of Jesus.

On the Feast of Corpus Christi following he made his First Communion.

It was not long before he found the truth of what converts had often told him, that never after their reception into the Church had they been once troubled by a single doubt as to the wisdom of the step they had taken; they only lamented, "Too late have I found Thee, O eternal Wisdom."

Now at last he was incorporated with the visible Church, the One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of the Saints and Martyrs. He embraced the books that recorded their lives, and pressed to his heart the works of the great lights of the faith he had found.

which sometimes occur to him, and to investigate the truth, and when he has found it, to embrace it without delay; unless he wish to live under an habitual and most grievous guilt, and, by deferring his conversion, expose himself to a manifest danger of eternal damnation."—*Prælectiones Theol. P. Perrone, S. J.* (*Lovanii*, 1838), *vol.* I, *pp.* 290, 331, 332 *et* 339;—cum approbationibus Rom. theol. ad calcem voluminis.

Day by day he thanked God for bringing him to the harbour of safety and rock of stability, but now he had troubles from an unexpected quarter.

His old friends, his college companions, his relatives even in some cases, now that he had taken the final step, turned upon him with malice and contempt. The man of whose acquaintance they had once been proud, they now declared to have proved himself the weak-minded fellow they had always thought him; the talents they had formerly complimented, they now protested never existed; and the thinking power and genius they formerly admired, they now assured each other he never possessed.

Boanerges said before all his congregation, they had lost from their communion a man in whom he thought once he had detected some ability, but who had proved himself a fool to be pitied, by his connexion with Popery, that "exploded superstition;" but he comforted himself with the hope that he would ere long return, when he would set him a penance before he would receive him, "to lick the whole of the floor of his Tabernacle clean." He knew Catholics liked good stiff penances, and that should be the one he would set him. A titter ran through the congregation at this witticism, and the people admired the off-hand way their Pastor contemplated the loss of one of his flock. Surely if to become a Catholic were the awful thing he made out that it was, prayer for his return and sorrow for his declension would have more befitted the occasion than this coarse piece of levity. A score of disreputable motives were given as those which had led him "astray," every conceivable reason for his departure from the faith of his education but the right and avowed one.

He soon found himself without a friend who had

known him in other days; and as real friends are not made in a day, it was long before he found others to replace the old.

But as everything comes at last to the man who knows how to wait, he was of good cheer, for he had his Church and his books.

By the way he cleared out his library; destroying the Unitarian and dangerous books he had so much cause to hate, and exchanging for Catholic literature the *useless* but harmless ones he no longer found pleasure in.

By the desire and advice of Father Bilway, Henry determined to enter on a course of study for the Priesthood, to which it was considered he had a vocation. Therefore six months after his reception into the Fold of Truth, he left England for France, in company with the good Priest who had received him, there to commence his studies. Now with tenfold vigour the love of souls he possessed in former days returned upon him. Now he hoped one day to go forth with the Divine Commission to teach the Truths of God, not as a self-constituted preacher of the Word, but bearing the signet of the Most High and the seal of His Apostleship—an Ambassador of the King.

CHAPTER XXXII.

TERRA FIRMA.

FIVE years after the events related in the last chapter, the solemn and beautiful ceremony of Ordination for the Priesthood took place at the church of St. Anne,

Spitalfields, belonging to the Fathers of the Order of Mary. Amongst those who that day received the Sacrament of Holy Orders, was the hero of this history. During his stay in France he had joined at Lyons the order of the Marist Monks; he had chosen to unite himself to them because their work is entirely confined to the poor and the ignorant of great cities, and missionary work amongst the heathen; they eschew the loftier ways of scholarship, and the disputations of the Forum; they associate not with the rich and noble, nor sit at the feasts of the great. Theirs is not the literary life of the learned Benedictines, nor the more popular though arduous work of the Order of St. Dominic; they have not the Scholastic genius of the Jesuits, though they lack not their heavenly fire; but where the dens and slums of our great cities are the most dangerous and benighted, there is their most congenial sphere. In the midst of the densest and filthiest rookeries, the disgrace of our wealth and boasted civilization, there is the peculiar work of the Marist Monk, unseen and little known save by the Angels of God, like the heavenly Mother-maid whose name they glory to bear, these devoted men spend their lives and substance in the midst of squalor, filth, and misery. 'Tis theirs to elevate and refine by their beautiful lives and Divine message, these outcasts of society; to gather in to the Supper of the Lord, from the highways and hedges, the halt, the lame, and the blind; to teach in their vast and well ordered schools thousands of children, who but for them would have lived and died, never having heard of God or heaven. 'Tis theirs to console and help amidst grinding poverty, starvation, disease, and death Christ's poor, in whom they see disguised their Lord. 'Tis theirs to lead the half-instructed and illiterate factory-hands that dwell

within sound of their Angelus bell, to make of their lives and work a means of raising themselves to a purer and nobler happiness than the courtiers of royalty ever know. In a word, if ever Christ's example has been followed, and His work done in the way He did it, these holy, humble Priests and Nuns of the Order of Mary—the Mother immaculate—do it. And here we leave Henry Pattison. He is in his element now. When we last saw him it was at nine o'clock one Sunday morning in the cathedral-like and magnificent structure that adjoins this monastery; the large and beautiful church was filled with poor, ragged, dirty, and shoeless children gathered from the lanes that surround the place; Henry was in the pulpit speaking simple and loving words to them explanatory of the Lord's Prayer, and as he ceased to speak and the children rose up to sing and join their thousand voices in the words of the hymn of St. Bernard,—

> "Jesus, the very thought of Thee
> With sweetness fills my breast,"

we who knew him when torn with doubts and tossed about in despair how to find the light, thought "This is the Lord's work and marvellous in our eyes."

The service over, we spoke to him in the Sacristy. We said, "Henry, do you repent having become a Catholic?"

He replied with a face lit up with joy and intelligence, "I repent only of my wasted life before I knew the way of truth. I can say with one who came to visit Solomon, 'It was a true report that I heard in my own land; mine eyes have seen it, and behold the half was not told me, it ex-

ceedeth the fame which I heard.' I ask nothing of any of my old friends but their prayers for my perseverance, and let them know I shall never cease to pray till every one of them participates in what, by God's mercy, I now enjoy."

A.M.D.G.

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